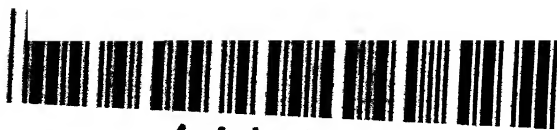


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ETHICAL DILEMMAS OF MINISTERS

ETHICAL DILEMMAS OF MINISTERS

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Several hundred pastors of various Protestant groups have contributed to the conclusions of this volume. They present a wide range of practice and opinion. The significance of the study, however, lies in the dual fact that a large proportion of them acknowledge confusion and doubt regarding the ethics of much that they seem obliged to do, and that the seminaries in which they were trained do not make such provision for training in professional ethics as might help modern ministers to recognize and solve the ethical problems inherent in their relations to one another, to their parishioners and to the general public.

There are many, of course, who feel that discussion of their private practices regarding fees, rebates, the marriage of divorced men and women or the unqualified, the discipline of church members, the selection of sermon topics, participation in civic controversies, and the like is impertinent and irrelevant. These are in the minority, however, and the proportion of those who express serious concern and sincere desire to set their houses in better order is too large to ignore. Some seem quite sure that their practices are above reproach. Others, whose practices are identical, have misgivings about them, and are eager either for greater insight or for the moral support of their fellow ministers in efforts to put all their professional behavior above suspicion of self-interest or sharp practice.

Needless to say, this volume¹ makes no pretence at solving

¹The study here reported was carried out by Doctor F. F. Mueller under the direction of the Research Department of the Yale University Divinity School and in co-operation with ten theological seminaries and their alumni. The original monograph on which this report is based is a dissertation presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Yale University under the title "The Ethical Aspects of Ministerial Practice," 1936.

moral problems or of providing specific standards or codes of ministerial practice. It assumes no position of moral superiority. It reports what ministers themselves are doing and thinking, and it propounds for discussion the very queries they are raising.

Ten theological seminaries co-operated in the gathering of the data on which this volume is based, circulating the questionnaires among their alumni, and furnishing information concerning their own methods of teaching ministerial ethics. These were, in alphabetical order, Auburn Theological Seminary, Bangor Theological Seminary, Berkeley Divinity School, Biblical Seminary, Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Drew Theological Seminary, Lutheran Theological Seminary (Gettysburg), Hartford Seminary Foundation, Lutheran Theological Seminary (Mt. Airy), Yale University Divinity School. The graduates of classes 1901-1930 residing in New England, New York, and New Jersey received the questionnaire, and replies came in from a total of 886 men, or 59 per cent. Of these, 823 were usable. In addition, about 100 ministers were interviewed and careful stenographic notes of these conversations were made. These served both to check the validity of the questionnaire and to supplement it at points where the give and take of face-to-face discourse was needed to bring out facts and opinions. The results were classified in such a way as to compare the replies from different seminaries, different denominations, different sections, and different age groups.

The body of material brought together from these sources constitutes one of the first and most extensive efforts to provide for ministers a basis for a professional code and for theological schools a basis for a course in ministerial ethics.

Without debating for the moment the value of codes, one may note with interest the reluctance of ministers to develop standards of professional conduct. The ministry has roots as old as medicine, but the physicians were the earliest of professional groups to devise a code for their own guidance. Nothing approaching the medical code has been evolved by other professional groups,

but such codes exist in law, teaching, and business, and numerous books and articles have dealt with the subject of professional practice of members of other groups.

The backwardness of the ministry in devising codes may be attributed to several causes. For one thing, the ministry has traditionally been thought of as a divine calling rather than as a profession, and therefore not subject to human standards. In the second place the subject matter of ministerial practice is itself largely concerned with moral problems for which theology is supposed to afford solutions. Dealing thus constantly with the moral problems of others, the minister might be supposed to be able to handle his own. Finally, among the Protestants many divergences of practice have grown up, owing to widely different social conditions, such as the manner in which the minister is supported. This has led to differences in viewpoint as to the justification of such practices as the acceptance of perquisites, making a general code impracticable.

These same underlying causes doubtless account for the almost total absence of teaching regarding ethical practices. Although courses in professional ethics are offered in 8 per cent of schools of education, 41 p.c. of schools of architecture, 17 p.c. of business schools, 84 p.c. of schools of dentistry, 56 p.c. of schools of journalism, 67 p.c. of law schools, 43 p.c. of medical schools, and 91 p.c. of schools of nursing,¹ in not one of 57 theological schools investigated by the Study of Theological Education² was any course in ministerial ethics then found.³ More extensive study of the work of the ten seminaries co-operating in this investigation revealed that professional ethics is dealt with only incidentally and quite superficially in other related courses. It is not surprising,

¹These figures are from "Ethics in the Teaching Profession," by Doctor T. D. Martin, reported in the Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. IX, No. 1, January, 1931, p. 11.

²This fact was determined from a study of the original data gathered by the Study of Theological Education under the direction of Doctor Mark A. May.

³In 1931 and 1933 Doctor Arthur E. Holt gave a course in vocational ethics at Chicago Theological Seminary. This included a section on ministerial ethics.

therefore, that the ministers who supplied the information reported in this volume were frequently lacking in sensitiveness to what constitutes an ethical issue and quite as often at a loss as to what would constitute an ethical solution of the problems of which they were aware.

Under the circumstances one might have expected that conferences for ministers and the meetings which ministers arrange themselves for the discussion of their local or denominational difficulties and plans would have given time to ethical issues of ministerial practice. Here again, however, there has been almost a total disregard of such issues.

This volume is not offered as a text in ministerial ethics. We are not so presumptuous as to try to educate our fellow ministers in the rightness or wrongness of their professional conduct. We do feel, however, that they are entitled to the judgments of several hundred representative clergymen on the ethics of many conventional practices. Possibly a few will gain courage from knowing that the consciences of others are troubled and may be led to attempt some form of concerted action which would bring out into the open a number of sore spots that are now concealed by silence or under the weight of custom. Possibly some enterprising group or individual may be tempted to gather the extensive case material that would be required for an adequate treatment of such problems in the seminary curriculum.

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New Haven, Connecticut
June, 1937

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PART ONE

PRACTICES AND OPINIONS

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Chapter I

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, through its Committee on Marriage and the Home, issued a statement under date of April 10, 1933, emphasizing the minister's responsibility for the success of the marriage relationship. The statement, entitled "Safeguarding Marriages," begins as follows:

Most couples are married by clergymen. This is true even of many who approach marriage without definite Christian convictions, and is explained by the fact that for centuries marriage has been a concern of religion. Doubtless also these people go to the minister because they feel that marriage is a relationship of the most sacred character. The part which the minister plays in the event brings him into an influential and responsible relationship with the new family.

This statement goes on to urge ministers to give educational preparation for marriage and to hold interviews with those contemplating marriage in which, among other things, the sex relationship be adequately discussed and helpful literature provided. It is stated that marriage should not be solemnized for strangers and that ministers have a responsibility to give later pastoral service through "organization of classes or clubs for young married people in the churches."

It is not our purpose to argue the ethical validity of the position taken in this statement, but to report what ministers actually do in the matter and to reveal the conflicting motives which seem to be in operation. Whether to perform the marriage ceremony in a given case is not always easy to decide. Some ministers prefer to fall back on some general rule, such as "marry no strangers,"

or "marry any who have a license." Others are not satisfied to follow either extreme, but take the time to study each case and even to aid couples contemplating marriage by careful instruction in the basic facts on which a successful union depends.

In the marrying of persons who have been divorced, no general practice prevails. Again, some take one extreme position and marry no divorced persons, and others go no further than to note the fact that one or both parties to a new union have been divorced. Presumably these wide divergencies in practice are to be expected in so controversial a matter, especially in view of the growing tendency for those seeking a marriage not sanctioned by the church to go before a justice of the peace whose concern is purely legal.

While confusion of thought on the subject is thus partly accounted for, it is not so easy to explain or justify widespread thoughtlessness and indifference among the clergy with regard to what constitutes their obligation to the church, to society, to the individuals concerned and to the families they may establish. It cannot be denied that self-interest, as represented in fees, is a factor in the case tending toward laxity of standards. But apart from this conflict of interest and duty, there is also a frequently expressed feeling of hopelessness as to the possibility of even approximating the high standards of marriage upheld by the church. Secular pressures cannot be counteracted by anything an individual minister may do. The problem is getting out of hand.

To what extent any or all of these various explanations and justifications of existing practice are warranted can best be debated after the whole situation has been reviewed. Let us get before us a few facts as to the prevalence of various practices in the matter of marriage, preparation for marriage, and the marrying of divorced individuals, together with the attitudes of ministers toward these practices, and then we shall be in a position to inquire as to possible steps toward the improvement of the situation.

FIRST MARRIAGES

As pointed out in the Introduction, the facts reported in this volume are derived from interviews with a hundred clergymen mainly in the northeastern part of the United States, and from questionnaires from 823 clergymen, the graduates of ten seminaries, residing in New England, New York, and New Jersey. Each seminary invited the co-operation of its own alumni of the classes of 1901-30, and the resulting returns show no evidence of any type of selection which would cast doubt on the representative character of the replies. We have a cross section of the practice and opinions of the better trained ministers of the Northeast, and we will treat our returns in this way without constantly repeating the statement that they are returns from precisely so many individuals.

At some points the graduates of the several seminaries differed so radically in practice or opinion that the facts are reported by seminaries. This may excite some curiosity as to why these differences occur, and lead to fruitful thinking as to the social and theological origins and justifications of many clerical practices which at first sight may appear unqualifiedly unethical.

With this introduction let us turn to a consideration of ministerial practice regarding the performance of the marriage rite in the case of those who have not been married before.

A complete summary of the varying practices is given in Table I, reference to which will show that there is no general policy governing the ministry of even one denomination.

Marriage of Church Members Only

A very small number (2.5 per cent) marry church members only, although a large number express their judgment as in favor of this policy. A few have arrived at the conviction that the church should forbid its pastors to officiate at weddings of non-members—an attitude represented in the following statement:

I am increasingly compelled to the belief that our whole

TABLE I

PRACTICE OF MINISTERS IN MARRYING PERSONS
WHERE THE PROBLEM OF DIVORCE IS NOT INVOLVED

	MARRY CHURCH MEMBERS ONLY	LICENSE SUFFICIENT FOR MEMBERS	LICENSE SUFFICIENT FOR ALL	INTERVIEW TO DETERMINE FITNESS	INVESTIGATION AS TO FITNESS	REPORTING STANDARDS OF FITNESS
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Bangor (Cong.).....	..	57	52	18	5	21
Hartford (Cong.).....	..	43	38	42	4	15
Yale (Cong.).....	..	51	39	44	6	30
Gettysburg (Luth.).....	..	56	33	33	6	22
Mt. Airy (Luth.).....	5	60	45	42	3	22
Auburn (Presby.).....	..	61	40	37	1	31
Berkeley (Epis.).....	15	26	22	37	11	22
Colg.-Roch. (Bapt.)....	..	63	51	32	5	18
Drew (Meth.).....	2	68	59	22	4	23
Bib. Sem. (Inter-denom.)	3	69	58	36	3	8
Average.....	2.5	55.4	43.7	34.3	4.8	21.2

Meaning of columns:

1. Marry church members only: "I never marry persons who are not church members."
2. License sufficient for members: "I marry any persons belonging to my church, without any question as to their fitness, provided they are legally eligible."
3. License sufficient for all: "I consider a license from the state sufficient evidence of fitness."
4. Interview to determine fitness: "Before agreeing to marry a couple I ask them questions about their ideas, fitness and hopes, and if satisfied, I marry them."
5. Investigation to determine fitness: "Before agreeing to marry a couple I investigate the facts as to their fitness and do not depend upon their own statements."
6. Reporting standards of fitness: "My standards of fitness for marriage, on which I base my agreement to marry a couple, are as follows."

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who filled out questionnaires, 57 per cent marry any persons belonging to their church without any question as to their fitness, provided they are legally eligible; 52 p.c. consider a license from the state as sufficient evidence for all, etc. Similarly read figures for each category.

system is at fault, and it is my judgment that ultimately the church must insist upon its ministers functioning only when one or both of the parties are connected with the church. Personally I would welcome regulations forbidding our clergy from participating where parties are not church adherents.

Others believe that the minister should confine his services to church members for the reason that his usefulness depends upon the personal contact he has with his people and also because this would avoid evils which accompany the marriage of persons whom he does not know. We quote from a pastor on this point:

The minister should confine his service to members of his church. I am not selfish in that. I would be glad to do anything for any one, but my usefulness depends upon my intimacy with my people. I cannot be of help to a person whom I do not know. I marry people whom I do not know, but do it reluctantly. A student came to me and asked me to marry him to a young woman whom I did not know. I did so and learned later that something was off color with the marriage. The family was not in rapport. The marriage has since gone on the rocks and there is a divorce. If I had insisted they could not be married by me because they were not members of my church, I would have felt better.

Another group would not limit their marriage services to members of their own church, but think they should refuse to officiate at weddings of persons who do not believe in Christ and who are not sympathetic with the work of the church. As one pastor put it:

If people do not believe in Christ I would ask why they come to the church to be married. Why not go to the justice of the peace? If I marry people in the name of Christ and they do not believe in him, I would question whether their vow is sincere.

Quite the opposite view is taken by many clergymen who do not hesitate to marry strangers where the problem of divorce is not involved. In the case of some pastors, a large number of their

weddings are performed for people whom they do not know. Typical comments indicate the practice:

Most of the marriages I perform are outside of my own church members. I suppose that is true of all the preachers in this city.

Perhaps 50 per cent of the people who come to me to be married are other than my own people. I do not ask questions of those who are not divorced. If they have the license I marry them. Once in a while I do question them, as in a case of imbecility.

Occasionally the pastors make some pretence at being selective regarding marriage of strangers, but the standard does not appear to be very high. The following quotation is illustrative:

I don't marry those who come in from the street. If they can show papers and bring witnesses I will. I will not furnish witnesses. They must have two witnesses who know the contracting parties.

A few clergymen, however, insist on knowing the persons whom they marry or at least that they have a recommendation from some one known by the minister. A pastor in a downtown Brooklyn church says on this point:

I never marry any one unless they are known to me or are recommended by some one I know. Being in a city church one would have all kinds of "riff-raff" coming to him if he did not have such a principle. They can lie all they please on the license and the city clerk looks only for a fee.

In some rural sections it seems to be only a rare occurrence for strangers to request the minister to officiate at weddings. Men in small communities testify further that their people "want to go into the larger cities to get married. They like to go away, get married secretly, and then come back to announce it."

The fact that these rural people go into the cities for marriage sometimes produces a lucrative business for the city pastor who is

located in the vicinity of the town clerk's office. It was stated that "often people ask the town clerk where to go to get a minister. If one 'is in with' the clerk, he is more apt to get weddings."

It appears that when strangers come asking for marriage, the clergy respond favorably for the most part.

Furthermore, when people come from out of town for marriage, they seldom give the minister previous notice of their coming. The request is made that the ceremony be performed immediately. Under such circumstances apparently most of the clergy marry these persons without questioning, other than to find out whether they have been divorced. There is some testimony on the part of a few, however, that they will not marry couples under such conditions. Typical viewpoints are given herewith.

Ordinarily I will not marry a couple who come for immediate marriage. I would like to know more about the situation and I make an investigation in almost every instance.

I don't want anything to do with hasty marriages. I would rather marry a divorced couple that I know something about than a boy and girl whom I know nothing about.

The clergy also testify to the fact that when they marry people unknown to them they probably unite some persons who fail in the relationship. A few ministers recite instances of having united persons in marriage, when they felt such persons would probably not make a success of their new venture. Two cases will serve as examples:

A girl from . . . came to me to be married one day. She was a foreigner and was twelve years old. The mother was with her. I said, "Aren't you pretty young to be married?" The mother answered, "She has a sister who was married when she was younger than that." I married them. Maybe I shouldn't.

An elderly man in . . . asked me to marry him to a girl from another state. They had corresponded. The girl was a youngster and when she arrived was undecided. She was cry-

ing and didn't want to get married. The mother said she felt like spanking the girl. I married them and they got along all right.

The Consideration of Fitness for Marriage

Questions of fitness for marriage are considered by nearly one half the clergy in the case of persons who are members of the church concerned, although on this point there are wide differences as between certain denominations. The graduates of Berkeley (Episcopal),¹ Hartford (Congregational),¹ Yale (Congregational)¹ are far more frequently concerned on this point—that is, a significantly smaller proportion are willing to marry any one without considering their fitness—than are the graduates of Drew (Methodist),¹ Colgate-Rochester (Baptist),¹ or Auburn (Presbyterian).¹

Nearly half of the entire group regard a license from the state sufficient evidence as to fitness for marriage. That is, they accept the standards set by the state in practice even though in theory they and the churches they represent avow a higher standard. It is interesting to note a trend toward greater strictness among the younger men. Not only do fewer of the youngest group consider a license as satisfactory evidence of fitness, but more of them hold interviews to discover the "ideas, fitness, and hopes" of those seeking to enter the marriage relation.

One might perhaps expect some differences in practice among ministers serving downtown city churches, suburban churches, and rural parishes, but the location of the church seems to bear no relation to the prevalence of interest in fitness.

A number of arguments are presented in justification of the practice of following the legal standards rather than a higher standard set by the church. As one pastor stated it: "The minister cannot perform the marriage ceremony for any one as a

¹The name of the denomination in parentheses does not mean that the seminary in question is necessarily exclusively denominational in character, but that only those graduates of the denomination named in each case are included in the study.

minister. He is in reality a civil official when joining a couple in matrimony." The contrast between this view and that of the Catholic Church is obvious.

It is also stated that the pastor has no responsibility in the matter and that the entire obligation is on the state. If a minister refuses to marry a couple, these men argue, the couple will go to some other clergyman or to a civil official and thus society is not helped by the refusal. The following statement is representative:

I believe the responsibility for determining fitness for marriage belongs to the state. All people licensed by the state will be married by some one and in the end society is no better because I refused to marry couples whom I deemed unfit.

Moreover, these pastors consider that they do not have a right to judge as to the fitness of a person, if the state has once issued a license, and if the case is not contradictory to Biblical teaching. Two comments are sufficient to illustrate this attitude:

I am more than ever convinced that I should not pry around into their past with embarrassing questions. I am not a judge as to their fitness if the state has issued them a license.

How can I question the fitness for marriage of a couple if the Biblical teaching is followed and the state permits?

Furthermore, the view is presented that it is futile for the minister to attempt to influence strange couples who already have been issued a license, and that to refuse, or act as a judge, might work definite harm to the church or create a feeling of resentment.

Occasionally the clergy admit that when the license from the state is accepted as an adequate standard they sometimes marry persons who should not be united. Said one pastor, typical of several:

If they have a license, I marry them. Laws are terribly lax about allowing certain persons to get a license. One of the

most awful things I do is to unite persons who I know won't make a success of it. I think other ministers do the same. I can't feel it is very much of a divine transaction. At other times, however, I believe it is a divine union.

While some pastors indicate that they would like to discover whether couples are worthy of marriage, they feel it is almost impossible because of the difficulty and embarrassment in questioning strangers. Some of the young clergy think older men might be able to hold such interviews and perhaps give instruction, but that they in their youth and inexperience cannot talk on such personal matters. Their attitudes are shown below:

Under present practice the opportunity for a pastor to ascertain much about "their ideas, fitness and hopes" is exceedingly limited and must of necessity be superficial. Many, indeed most, of those seeking the minister's services are strangers. The minister must rely upon the statements contained in the license. It is far from satisfactory.

I haven't presumed to instruct or preach or offer as much advice or suggestion as I feel an older man might. As you go farther along into life you naturally are in position to do more of that.

Neglect, for one reason or another, of the whole problem of fitness for marriage, of standards which should be maintained, seems rather widespread. Nevertheless about one-third of the pastors do hold interviews of some kind to determine fitness, which means that they do not accept the state license as sufficient evidence of qualification for marriage. This group considers that the Christian minister has another standard than that of the state and that he is not under obligation to marry all who make the request of him. One pastor says:

A man is legally the agent of the state, but he is not under obligation to any or every couple who comes to him with a legal license. The Christian man should be governed by his conscience and the teaching of his Master.

Marriage in Case of Pregnancy

If ministers are requested to officiate at a wedding when pregnancy is involved, they will usually respond under certain circumstances. One pastor requires a doctor's written statement testifying to the condition of the girl. He says, "If a girl is pregnant I will marry her, but I must have the doctor's written statement that she is pregnant. It is not up to me to make the investigation."

Others feel that some of the clergy attempt to bring about marriage in every case of pregnancy and they are not in agreement with their fellow ministers on this stand. They take the view that it is often a great mistake to force such a marriage unless love is present. Statements of this view follow:

You perpetrate a greater wrong if you put together people who are not mated. The stigma upon illegitimate children is pretty much gone today, is it not? We don't make them legitimate by marrying the parents. If they are children of love it is all right but if children of passion it is a different thing. If you tie those people who hate each other, that is terrible. Instead of the baby drawing them together it is the cause of endless reproach never completely forgotten or forgiven.

I have never had occasion to marry a runaway couple. I married a boy and girl who were caught. The mother brought the two into my presence thinking she was doing her bounden duty. I tried to get the woman's anger to cool and to put the love of God into her. The next day I had a talk with the boy and girl separately to try to find if they had any love for each other. I finally married them.

Pregnancy of the girl does not justify marriage even though the groom is responsible. Sometimes the groom should not marry the girl even though he caused the pregnancy. Two wrongs do not always make a right.

Standards of Fitness

In view of the variety of practice regarding marriage, the clergy were asked to indicate on the questionnaires their standards

of fitness in this matter. Only 21 per cent responded to the request. When we note, however, that more than two-fifths (44 p.c.) state that a license is a sufficient standard and that only about a third (34 p.c.) hold interviews, this small response is understood.

As to the nature of the standards set forth, a part of this group again re-emphasizes the view that a license is the only requirement needed. In other cases, such general terminology is used that one cannot determine whether the minister's standard is satisfied by a mere casual look at the candidates, or whether he seriously goes into the various phases of character and personality necessary for a successful marriage. Typical statements follow:

Religious, mental and physical competency.

Moral responsibility, age, health and mentality.

Must be mentally responsible.

Reasonable assurance that the man will be able to support a wife, that they know each other and that there are no physical handicaps.

Proper age, legal requirements fulfilled. If I think they will be better off married than single, I marry them.

A few of the clergy suggest somewhat more specific requirements. A number are given to illustrate:

Sufficient maturity, mutual acquaintance, seeming love, purpose to form a life union, sanity, no known venereal disease, racial compatibility, religious agreement or intelligent conviction, prospect of economic sufficiency or capacity, and will to thrift.

No strangers unless they have witnesses whom I know. Careful as to age, minors, disparity of age, ability to establish a home, employment, etc.

That they love each other; that they are mindful of the heavy responsibilities, economically, socially, and spiritually which are involved in the act.

I also have a rather frank talk on matters both physical and

spiritual. I always touch on the matter of birth control. If persons concerned are not willing to talk, I generally refuse to marry them.

A few of the lists of standards are given in sufficient detail to suggest that at least some definite questions would have to be asked and a serious discussion engaged in, if the standards are applied. We quote from one who lays down seven requirements and he says that "all of these are equally important."

1. Parents' knowledge and consent (in most cases).
2. Discussion on the sexual relationship, with a competent individual.
3. A reasonable period of engagement or companionship (six months or over).
4. Knowledge of creating a family budget.
5. Where necessary—to affiliate with the same church.
6. Knowledge of the value of religion in the home and church membership.
7. Duty and necessity for establishing a family and home life.

After the admission of one pastor, however, we are not quite certain how seriously the standards listed should be taken. He states his demands in these words:

Not too great disparity in age; good health, including medical examination; minimum of difference in social barriers such as race, religion, etc. For example, I have always attempted to emphasize upon a Protestant-Catholic couple the difficulty of overcoming these barriers, and urge them to go either Protestant or Catholic, if possible, before marriage.

Then he closes his statement in the following manner: "I admit I am rationalizing under this question, for I have no rigid rules."

Preparation of People for Marriage

A few men, though, seem to be taking the marriage problem seriously by preparing their young people for it. One pastor re-

ports his standards as "health, employment, education, religion, finance, and home life." Then he adds, "I have been giving a course of six lessons to marriageable young people entitled, 'Preparation for Marriage.'" A second says he has given four addresses to his "older young people's society" on the subject of marriage. He has gone into the sex and birth control questions and has given them the names of several physicians whom he trusts, and from whom they may secure more specific information. But on the whole, the clergy do not seem to be making an adequate attempt to prepare their people for the marriage relationship.

It has just been stated above that there are a few ministers who give information to their young people concerning sex and birth control, or they make arrangements with physicians so that proper knowledge can be secured. The Committee on Marriage and the Home in the Federal Council agree with the position of this group and declare that much of the maladjustment in family life today is due to ignorance of the sex relationship. They are also of the opinion that the pastor can help people greatly in this matter through providing literature and instruction. Their statement follows:

Studies in unhappy marriages and the experience of family consultation institutes reveal that ignorance and maladjustment of the sex relationship appear in most cases. The pastor cannot be certain that those who come to him for marriage understand these vital relationships which God Himself has ordained and sanctified. If there is inadequate understanding the pastor may render to the new family a service of the greatest importance through the instruction which he gives them. Literature that will help the young people in the new adjustments of marriage should be at hand.²

As to the extent to which this information is given, one clergyman who instructs his youth believes that today almost all of the

²From the statement quoted at the beginning of the chapter.

younger ministers provide instruction for their people. Our investigation has not confirmed his view. There are many who do not consider themselves as being responsible for educating their people in these matters. They state that the responsibility for initiative on this question is upon the people rather than the minister. They say further that since so many persons who come to be married are strangers, and because of the usual nervousness accompanying a wedding, it is next to impossible to provide instruction. Typical statements are given herewith:

I have never felt any responsibility in this matter as a minister. If a young man should come and say he has venereal disease, I should tell him not to marry. But I have never felt called upon to give sex information to couples being married and I personally should resent it.

I have never given sex information. In general I have never considered it my responsibility. Individually, either sex might ask questions, but no questions have been asked of me. The initiative on this question probably should be taken by the people getting married, but they are so concerned about other things that they do not think of that. If people are members of the church and know the pastor well, they might be able to confer with him as an old friend. It probably would be a wise thing to give this information if it could be brought about, but so many people are strangers and there is a rather strained situation when people come for marriage. They come with their witnesses usually without giving previous notice and want the ceremony performed immediately.

Moreover, some of the clergy indicate that they do not know how to provide instruction on sex matters, while others state that people are already informed on these topics. It is likewise argued that for pastors to attempt to give this information would probably work more harm than good. These views are represented below:

I do not give sex information. I was never asked about it by my own people and I don't see how it can be given. I

assume that most people feel they are pretty well informed on the subject and it is a difficult question to be handled by pastors. Wouldn't it do more harm than good to give such instruction? I do know one Congregational minister who gave information to young couples on birth control and the people deplored it. He was a student in the seminary and lost his job. Occasionally, but not very often, I am asked point blank about the problem. In such case, one has to speak on it. My seminary never touched the question.

For the most part there seem to be very few men who give sex information and not many more who feel any responsibility to do so.

MARRIAGE OF DIVORCED PERSONS

To what extent are divorces the outcome of the rather lax practices which have just been described? To what extent is this growing tendency due to circumstances over which the minister has no control? Is divorce a necessary and often desirable solution of an impossible marriage situation? Have divorced persons no rights in a future marriage relation? Here again there is conflict between state standards and existing church standards as well as discrepancy among the various denominations. Does the problem of the marriage of divorced persons have an ethical aspect of sufficient importance to demand attention from religious leaders?

As in the first half of this chapter, we present the current practice of clergymen and their opinions as to its necessity, wisdom, and fairness.

Five general types of practice are followed. At the one extreme is the group which refuses to marry any divorced persons, while at the other extreme are those ministers who marry any persons making application. Between these two positions are men who follow the Biblical standard,⁸ *i.e.*, they will marry the innocent

⁸For the Biblical grounds, the statement was made in the questionnaire, "Adultery and desertion." The Presbyterian standard (The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., Chap. 24, VI, 1924, p. 102) reads "adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church or civil magis-

party if a divorce has been granted for the cause of adultery or desertion. A second type of practice between these extremes is that of the clergy who marry persons divorced on other than Biblical grounds, if such persons are the innocent parties. To illustrate this practice, if a divorce has been granted two people on the grounds of "incompatibility" or "mental cruelty," these ministers are willing to marry the innocent person. A third practice between the extreme positions is that of those who marry the person alleged to be the guilty party if there is evidence which indicates the person would establish a satisfactory home.

Since (with the exception of the refusal to marry any divorced persons) there is considerable difference among the denominations with respect to this practice,⁴ the facts are given in detail in Table II. Here is shown the percentage of pastors following each of the five types of practice.

Refusal to Marry

Very few men (3 per cent) refuse all divorced persons who apply, which is the first kind of action. There is no significant difference in denominational practice in this matter.

Those who adhere to this practice, that of refusing to marry any divorced persons, are men who feel deeply concerned about the divorce situation. In some cases they have attempted to determine who are worthy of remarriage, but have felt very much confused about the whole problem. Anything they do seems unsatisfactory and involves them in situations which conflict with their conscience. Feeling that it is impossible to learn the facts through questioning or investigation, this group has finally decided to make no further attempt at discrimination, and to refuse

trate." The United Lutheran position (Minutes of the Seventh Biennial Convention of the U. L. C. A., 1930, p. 112) reads "adultery and malicious desertion." In replying to the questionnaire, a few ministers erased the word "desertion," indicating "adultery" as the only valid ground for divorce.

⁴Inasmuch as all Episcopal clergy must secure permission from their Bishop before marrying any divorced persons, their practice does not appear in the table or discussion.

TABLE II
PRACTICE OF MINISTERS IN MARRYING DIVORCED
PERSONS

	NONE	BIBLICAL STANDARD	INNOCENT OTHER THAN BIBLICAL	GUILTY	ANY
	%	%	%	%	%
Bangor (Cong.).....	2	11	25	51	12
Hartford (Cong.).....	2	7	34	48	9
Yale (Cong.).....	5	8	26	47	14
Gettysburg (Luth.).....	..	50	36	14	..
Mt. Airy (Luth.).....	1	58	32	7	1
Auburn (Presby.).....	3	30	40	22	5
Colg.-Roch. (Bapt.).....	3	22	33	23	19
Drew (Meth.).....	6	44	36	11	3
Bib. Sem. (Inter-denom.).	6	54	23	9	9
Average.....	3.1	31.6	31.7	25.8	8.0

Berkeley Divinity School (Episcopal) is not included in this table since an Episcopal rector is not permitted to marry divorced persons without first referring the case to the Bishop for approval.

Meaning of columns:

1. None: "I do not marry any divorced persons."
2. Biblical: "I marry persons who have been divorced on grounds of adultery and desertion (Biblical) only, provided they are the innocent parties."
3. Innocent other than Biblical: "I marry persons who have been divorced on other than Biblical grounds if they are the innocent parties."
4. Guilty: "I marry the persons alleged to be the guilty parties if I have evidence that leads me to believe they would establish a satisfactory home."
5. Any: "I marry any divorced persons who come to me."

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who filled out questionnaires, 2 per cent do not marry any divorced persons, 11 p.c. follow the Biblical standard, etc. Similarly read table for each seminary.

Omission of decimals in percentages results occasionally in totals of 99 p.c. or 101 p.c. instead of 100 p.c.

to marry all divorced persons. The following statement illustrates the position:

Formerly I did not marry divorced people. Then I broke my rule by marrying a woman whose former husband said she was innocent. After that I questioned them and have been marrying every one who seems to me to be innocent, in case the divorce was secured on the ground of adultery. But I think I am about through with it. Most every one says that was the case and I rather favor not marrying them. I found myself to be a second-class lawyer. I am not going to ask questions hereafter, and I may not marry them. The responsibility lies with the contracting parties. When we know, which we seldom do, it puts us in a bad position. I favor not marrying them unless I know the circumstances. If I know the persons I may marry them, but my questioning does not get the truth. We have to do something to discourage this divorce business. Marriage has gotten to be very much of a joke.

The Biblical Standard

A larger group of the clergy (32 per cent) adhere to the second type of practice, the Biblical standard. In this procedure there is considerable difference among denominational groups. The seminaries having graduates adhering to this practice most strictly are Mt. Airy, Biblical Seminary, Gettysburg, and Drew, whose percentages run respectively 58 p.c., 54 p.c., 50 p.c., and 44 p.c. The Congregational groups have the fewest men checking the practice, Hartford having 7 p.c., Yale 8 p.c., and Bangor 11 p.c. Auburn men are in the middle ground with 30 p.c. and Colgate-Rochester with 22 p.c. The difference between the practice of the uppermost (Mt. Airy 58 p.c.) and the lowest (Hartford 7 p.c.) groups is very marked and highly reliable.⁵ There is likewise a significant

⁵The difference between Mt. Airy and Hartford is 7.8 S.D. A difference of 3 times its S.D. or standard error signifies that the two groups concerned would continue to be distinguished in at least 998 out of 1000 similar studies. If the difference were 2.5 times its S.D. the chances of there being a real difference would be about 994 in 1000. A difference of 7.8 S.D. is far beyond the limits of influence by chance factors.

difference between Mt. Airy (58 p.c.) and Auburn (30 p.c.) men.⁶

Apparently observance of the Biblical standard is a satisfactory procedure for a considerable number of the clergy (32 per cent). One pastor says that "Biblical principles need not be changed." A second reports that his experience has taught him "to confirm this practice and its wisdom, in even more absolute strictness and emphasis than was taught at the seminary." A third states:

Some of us thought the church's ideas about divorce were "old fashioned"; now I find myself in entire accord with the general prohibition about divorce and remarriage. The church should teach her members more about marriage before the ceremony.

A larger number of the clergy, however, believe the Biblical statements on divorce do not meet the problem in the present day. These men feel there are other valid grounds for divorce than those mentioned in the Scriptures. They state, too, that persons who have broken the marriage vow should not be branded as having committed social evil, but should rather be given another opportunity. The view is likewise presented that it would be better for people to be divorced and remarried than to remain unhappily united. Ministers, in denominations which recommend the Biblical standard, voice the above attitudes as well as those outside of such church bodies. Typical comments follow:

For years I have been opposed to the traditional view of the church about divorce. If a person has been granted a divorce contrary to Scriptural grounds, and he seeks marriage again, I believe in giving him the benefit of the doubt. Why brand him with social evil when incompatibility is probably the cause of wrong doing?

I was taught to follow the laws of the church which are strict (Biblical standard) and to conform to the laws of the state. However, practical problems are not the strong point of seminary instruction. Individual cases are different. It is bet-

⁶The difference between Mt. Airy and Auburn is 3.6 S.D.

ter that people are happily married than unhappily united by a bond both detest. Unless there are children, unhappily married couples are better separated. Even in the case of children this same fact may be true.

Further arguments are presented against the Scriptural grounds as the only basis for divorce. It is stated that divorce for other causes may be necessary as a measure of moral sanitation, that one may be the innocent party of a divorce granted on the charge of cruelty or incompatibility, and that other offences may be more serious than adultery. These views are given herewith:

Other grounds than adultery and desertion (as understood) are justifiable causes for divorce. Divorce is a necessary measure of moral sanitation aside from the purely physical consideration of the marriage relationship.

I carry it further than adultery. There are such things as cruelty and incompatibility and there is such a thing as being the innocent party in such a divorce. You can't possibly live with a crank. If I know what lies behind the divorce and the people who are before me to be married look as though they might make a go of the marriage, I will marry them.

Some things are worse than adultery. The adulterer may be good to his wife but the man who is not an adulterer may be a brute or a drunkard.

Marriage of the Innocent Party

Approximately the same number (32 per cent) follow the third practice, that of marrying the innocent party of a divorce granted on grounds other than adultery and desertion, as adhere to the Biblical standard. A larger percentage of Congregational men, however, observe this practice than follow the Biblical view. Bangor has 25 p.c., Yale 26 p.c. and Hartford 34 p.c. checking the practice. It will be noted that the great majority of graduates of several seminaries have either this or the Biblical standard as their procedure. Mt. Airy ranks first with 90 p.c. checking one or the other. The seminaries following are Gettysburg 86 p.c., Drew 80

p.c., Biblical Seminary 77 p.c. and Auburn 70 p.c. In other words, these groups all seem to be fairly strict in their practice, in that they marry only the innocent party.

One reason given for the practice of marrying the innocent party is that these men believe causes for separation other than infidelity and desertion are valid. This point has been adequately stated in previous quotations. Another argument for this procedure is that apparently many people secure a divorce for some cause other than adultery when adultery is the real basis. This is done in order to avoid the publicity which accompanies a divorce on grounds of infidelity. Statements of ministers on this point follow:

I started out with the idea that I wouldn't marry divorced people except the innocent party in case of unfaithfulness. I soon found that in practice that was not just nor Christian, that there are a good many cases where unfaithfulness is the reason for divorce, but it is not stated in the court action.

A judge said that in every case in which cruelty or some other cause is given as the basis for divorce, adultery is the real reason.

This third practice of marrying the innocent party, however, meets serious objection on the part of many ministers. It is stated that people coming to be married almost always say they are innocent, and that when a divorce is not contested the innocent person may really be the guilty one. Illustrations of this view are presented herewith:

I began marrying the "innocent party" and I never found a "guilty party" for ten years. At last a man admitted he was guilty and I married him forthwith on the basis that I had at last found an honest though "guilty" man.

The so-called "innocent party" is often the guilty party, especially in many uncontested divorces. Therefore, I want the facts in all cases.

Others, realizing the difficulty of determining who is innocent

and who is guilty, report that they study each case thoroughly and give the party the benefit of any doubt remaining. Some say further that they marry persons if it appears that such individuals would be strengthened by a second marriage. Typical statements follow:

The matter is by no means as simple as the answers checked make it sound. The "innocent" party is not always without guilt. I go into each case conscientiously and thoroughly. If only a slight doubt remains in my mind, I give the party the benefit of that doubt.

I did take the stand I would not marry the guilty party of a divorced couple, but I am skeptical of being able to find that guilty party. If it is some one who will be steadied by the second marriage, I will do it. I always want to know what the divorce was about and reserve the right to refuse them.

Still others who criticize the innocent party standard because of the practical impossibility of distinguishing between innocence and guilt, apparently see the sociological and psychological implications in the matter. They state that home relationships are often at fault and that other conditions beyond their control may drive persons into divorce. Cases in point follow:

One cannot distinguish between the person who is guilty and the one who is not guilty in a divorce. I doubt if a lawyer can. I may commit adultery, but I probably would not do it if the home relationships were all right.

It is very difficult to tell who is innocent. Sometimes men and women are almost driven to divorce. You really have to know all sides. It is so easy to blame, criticize, find fault and pass judgment. But even Jesus said, "Let him first cast a stone at her." He did not say, "Let him cast the first stone." Don't always damn the woman who sells her body, but damn the man who gives her starvation wages.

In spite of abundant testimony to the effect that the guilty and innocent parties cannot be determined, apparently a few of the

clergy feel it can be done if the minister goes to the trouble of investigating the facts. One pastor comments:

In case of a divorce, I won't marry the person I believe to be an offender, because he probably will do the same thing again. I never take the person's word, but always conduct a little bit of investigation. I never give the person my word at that time, but tell them I will call them up. They seem to be willing to wait since they have usually been turned down by some other preacher.

It appears from the above statement, however, that a thorough investigation is not always made.

Marrying of the Guilty

In the fourth type of procedure, the clergy are willing to marry the guilty party, if there is evidence which indicates the person would establish a satisfactory home. About a fourth (26 per cent) act in this manner. Here again there is a wide diversity among ministers of various denominations. The Congregational group leads the way, with Bangor 51 p.c., Hartford 48 p.c., and Yale 47 p.c. The remaining groups are rather far removed, the nearest being the Baptists, or Colgate-Rochester graduates, with 23 p.c. and the Presbyterians, or Auburn men, with 22 p.c., checking the practice. At the lower end of the scale in terms of percentage checked are Gettysburg 14 p.c., Drew 11 p.c., Biblical Seminary 9 p.c., and Mt. Airy 7 p.c.

Those who follow this procedure consider the matter of innocence and guilt as being unimportant. The vital issue, as they see it, is whether or not the attitude and purpose of the persons are such as to insure a successful second marriage. The groups feel that the view is realistic and based upon concern for human values. Illustrations of this attitude are given:

My concern is to discover if they have learned anything from the previous experience and have a high probability of success as they look ahead.

Except in rare instances the words "guilty party" have no meaning. My views are perhaps not orthodox but, as I think, more realistic and more concerned with truly spiritual values. The supreme consideration with me now is whether or not the spirit and intent of the parties seeking marriage can be regarded as such as to preserve spiritual values of life. I would not refuse marriage as a penalty for past conduct if present attitude and purpose are good.

Others in the group are of the opinion that the element of divorce is magnified unduly and that perhaps a greater evil is to marry persons who are not adequately prepared for it. Typical statements follow:

Divorce, whatever its evil, is a legal fact and frequently desirable. Unless I know the divorced party to be unworthy of remarriage, I disregard it.

I believe it is worse to marry a couple who I have reason to believe are incompatible, or ignorant of sane sex living, than to marry a guilty party of separation by divorce.

Apparently some of these men did not hold to the above principle in earlier years, but have arrived at their present practice as a result of experience in the pastorate. One says, "I have grown more lenient in the case of the guilty party when I can investigate the facts." A second states that "the individual human values have some way come to have more weight than general rules, as the years have gone by."

Marriage of Any Divorced Persons

A rather small group (8 per cent), considering the graduates of all seminaries together, follow the fifth procedure of marrying all divorced persons who come to them. The practice is fairly prevalent among the Baptist men (Colgate-Rochester) where we note that 19 p.c. claim to act in this manner. More than a tenth of the Congregationalists (Yale, 14 p.c., Bangor 12 p.c., and Hartford 9 p.c.) also marry all divorced persons who apply. Of the remain-

ing groups, Biblical Seminary has 9 p.c., Auburn 5 p.c., Drew 3 p.c., and Mt. Airy 1 p.c. who marry all divorced persons, while none of the Gettysburg men indicate this as their practice.

If the last two positions, *i.e.*, those who will marry the guilty party and those who will marry any divorced persons, are considered together, the Congregational group runs highest, Bangor having 63 per cent, Yale 61 p.c., and Hartford 57 p.c., checking one or the other. Colgate-Rochester (Baptist) men follow with 42 p.c. and Auburn (Presbyterian) with 27 p.c. The groups that follow these two practices least are Biblical Seminary (Interdenominational) with 18 p.c., Drew (Methodist) and Gettysburg (Lutheran) with 14 p.c. each, and Mt. Airy (Lutheran) with 8 p.c., checking one or the other.

Some of this group, it seems, have never thought about the matter and thus have not worked out a definite principle upon which to base their procedure. Others have attempted to discriminate, but finding it almost impossible to discover the facts, have arrived at the position that they might as well marry these persons as allow some one else to do it. A few see no reason for the minister to take a stand and place the whole responsibility upon the state. Cases in point are presented herewith:

My attitude is that if people have been legally divorced and desire the service of a minister for remarriage, there is no reason why I should not marry them.

They will probably be married anyway. A religious ceremony is better than a purely civil one.

Perhaps the financial side also influences men to adopt this policy of marrying all who apply, inasmuch as there is usually a fee connected with marriage. One minister admits, "Of course, we all like to get all the marriages we can."

Furthermore, ministers of this group express themselves as being in favor of divorce. In some cases they have even urged people to separate. They are of the opinion that divorce is an adjustment

for marital conflict and that the church has no right to take a stand upon the matter. Comments are presented herewith:

I have even advised people to get a divorce. If people try to live together when they are fighting all the time, it is wrong. I have changed my views on that since being in the active ministry. When I started out I thought I would never marry divorced persons.

I think, on the basis of sociological evidence, that divorce is an adjustment for conflict in the marital relationship and that it is impertinent, in the strict sense of the word, for a church to bless or ban divorces. Of course I am strongly in favor of putting religious sanctions on marriage to make it as strong as possible.

The practice of marrying all divorced persons is likewise justified on the ground that marriage is largely a matter of chance and that God has little to do with it. This group is of the opinion that divorce should be made easier. Their views follow:

I have become lenient on this matter. I doubt that "God joins together." I rather regard it as a hit-or-miss proposition. If a miss, get out of it—no use blighting two lives which under other conditions might be happy.

It is more important to make divorce cost less. I know now many living in open or secret sex relationship that is illicit who would gladly marry, but one or both are legally married to another with whom they have not lived for a long time and can't save enough money to get a divorce.

The argument is further advanced that since divorced persons can be married by a civil agent, there is nothing gained by refusing. Rather, it is felt that in performing the ceremony the minister has an opportunity for holding them to the church and of conferring God's blessing upon their union. The comment of one pastor illustrates the view:

If they have a license, they will get married anyhow. I accept the opportunity to impress upon them the sacredness

and seriousness of establishing their home, and invoke God's blessing on them, leaving with them the responsibility of making that home life a success.

There are others, however, who condemn the view just taken. They are of the opinion that the above argument is a rationalization and feel that marriage of divorced persons by a minister has no salutary effect. A minister says, "If a man's own conscience did not furnish a restraint, I don't think the blessing of the church upon his second marriage would have much restraint in his life."

On the other hand, there are those who think the minister's refusal to marry divorced persons might have some influence upon the present alarming divorce situation. To illustrate, one pastor comments, "It is true that if you do refuse such a person he will go to the justice of the peace, but at least you have entered the protest of the church and I think that is a good thing."

Marrying Divorced Strangers

With regard to marrying or refusing to marry divorced people who are strangers, only 61 per cent indicate what their practice is in the matter. Of the group reporting, about two-thirds state that they marry divorced strangers, while 35 p.c. refuse to do so. A part of this latter group thinks the pastor should confine himself to marrying members of his congregation only. It is argued that he will then know all persons who are applying for marriage and if they seem worthy he need not be concerned about the divorce element. We quote from a pastor on this point:

If the minister confines himself to marrying only members of his own congregation, then he will know the parties concerned. If his knowledge of the parties leads him to think it is desirable, he can marry them whether they have been divorced or not.

Others who follow this practice do not confine themselves to marrying members of their own congregation, but they do insist

on having personal knowledge of the individuals applying. In such cases, if the clergy feel the persons are worthy, even though divorced, they will perform the ceremony. This principle has been arrived at in part because it has proved impossible to determine the innocent party where persons have come from out of town.

Securing the Facts of the Divorce

It has just been noted that a large proportion of the clergy marry divorced strangers if they can secure the facts regarding the divorce. Three general methods are used in securing this information. The first method, accepting the word of the persons concerned, is followed by 36 per cent. The second method, that of requiring the court proceedings, is the practice of 41 p.c. In the third method, a mutual acquaintance is asked to give the facts. This is the procedure of 23 p.c. of the ministers.

Evidence as to the state of mind of the clergy is reflected in these figures. How seriously do they take the problem of divorce? As in the case of those marrying for the first time, it may be asked whether the state is the best or final judge of fitness. It is undoubtedly a step toward objective consideration of the facts to require court records, as 41 per cent do, although it is quite possible that the truth can be more nearly approached by asking the persons concerned, as 36 p.c. do. Certainly no general principles are in operation to govern the action of clergymen, although differences in seminary practice, which do not follow strictly denominational lines, may suggest that one or the other procedure is favored in each seminary. This influence cannot be very great, however, as in most cases less than half the graduates follow any one practice. The requirement of court proceedings is made, for example, by the following proportion of graduates: Biblical Seminary 60 p.c., Mt. Airy 52 p.c., Drew 50 p.c., Gettysburg 40 p.c., Hartford 36 p.c., Yale 36 p.c., Auburn 35 p.c., Bangor 33 p.c., and Colgate-Rochester 29 p.c.

Effect of Age on Practice

In considering these five types of practice according to age of the clergy, it was found that the youngest graduates⁷ in the case of every seminary follow the Biblical standard in a lesser degree than do the oldest group. At the same time more of the youngest group marry the guilty party of a divorce than do the oldest graduates. The middle group vary considerably in their position in different seminaries.

Effect of Location on Practice

Again, when we consider these five methods of procedure with reference to location of the clergy, it appears that the environment has little or no effect. The questionnaires were tabulated according to four general types of churches, namely, city or town churches with members widely scattered, city or town churches with members chiefly within a short distance, suburban churches, and churches in villages or open country. This last group represents the rural ministers. The results show the practice of rural men to be about the same as the practice in city or town churches and also about the same as in suburban churches.

Denominational Differences in Practice

Differences between seminaries in the type of practice reported by their alumni have been reported in the past few pages. Since in most instances the alumni of only one denominational group in a seminary are included, the seminary differences correspond to denominational differences. To what extent the seminary is itself responsible for the practice of its alumni is not known. The extent of its influence may be inferred, however, by a comparison of the practice of Yale graduates who are Congregationalists with that of Yale graduates who belong to other

⁷The clergy were divided into three groups according to age: the oldest group graduating in the period from 1901 to 1910; the middle group in the period 1911-20; and the youngest group in the period 1921-30.

churches. The facts in regard to the marrying of divorced persons are given in Table III.

TABLE III

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CONGREGATIONAL AND OTHER GRADUATES OF YALE IN THE PRACTICE OF MARRYING DIVORCED PERSONS

	NONE	BIBLICAL STANDARD	INNOCENT OTHER THAN BIBLICAL	GUILTY	ANY
Congregational graduates . . .	% 5	% 8	% 26	% 47	% 14
Graduates in other churches.	13	28	25	25	9

It is significant that ministers working in different denominations, all having graduated from the same seminary, should vary in their practice to the extent here revealed. Of even greater significance is the difference between the practice of Congregational men and graduates in other churches, when the percentage of those marrying none and those following the Biblical standard are combined. In this case the figure for the former is 13 per cent and for the latter it is 41 p.c. It is clear that the application of the Biblical standard or even more rigid controls, and its converse in the practice of marrying even the guilty party to a divorce under certain conditions, are matters which are determined less by seminary teaching than by other factors.

A number of possible explanations for this difference in practice may be suggested, all of which may have had some bearing. Pre-theological education, the parts of the country from which the men have come, and the home environments may have had some influence. The fact that the history and polity of the various churches are taught by faculty men, or ministers in the community who have been reared in the tradition of those groups, may also have its effect. And finally, the association with pastors of a par-

ticular church body when one is in the active ministry, as well as the official pronouncement of the church upon the issue, may shape ministerial practice.

In this connection it will be recalled that the Lutheran ministers follow the Biblical standard more than those of any other church body and that the Methodist and Presbyterian also adhere to this practice to a greater extent than the clergy of other denominations. This difference in practice on the part of the Lutheran men is explained when one notes that the Lutheran Church has always attempted to base its practice in this matter upon Scriptural teaching. As recently as 1930 the Biblical principle of divorce only on grounds of "adultery and malicious desertion" was reiterated by the Church in Convention.⁸

The Methodist Church has also had this principle in its Discipline, but in recent years has made some changes. In 1928 it was recognized that the innocent person might be remarried "when it is clearly established in the mind of the minister that the true cause for divorce was adultery, or its full moral equivalent."⁹ One of the Methodist clergy stated that the words "full moral equivalent" were placed in the recommendation because of the fact that some people who have secured a divorce because of adultery have stated some other grounds for the sake of avoiding publicity. In the 1932 Discipline another change has been made and the rule now reads that the innocent person may be remarried "when it is clearly established by competent testimony that the true cause for divorce was adultery or other vicious conditions which through mental or physical cruelty or physical peril invalidated the marriage vow."¹⁰ If this latter principle can be interpreted as representing the mind of the Methodist clergy, one can anticipate that the Biblical principle will be followed less rigidly in the future by this group.

⁸"Report of the Committee on Moral and Social Welfare," Minutes of the Seventh Biennial Convention of the U. L. C. A., 1930, p. 112.

⁹Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1928, p. 70.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 1932, p. 63.

The Presbyterian Church has also had a long tradition of basing its practice upon Biblical teaching. In the Constitution of this church (Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.), printed in 1924, the principle reads that "Nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage." In case of such divorce, "it is lawful for the innocent party" only "to marry another."¹¹

FACTS AND ISSUES

In spite of agitation regarding the divorce situation, the practice of ministers reflects thoughtlessness or hopelessness. Little attention is given to preparation of young people for marriage, or to the qualifications of those seeking marriage. Almost half the clergy feel that a license is sufficient evidence of fitness. About a third interview the couple, but practically none go beyond the interview. Justification is offered on the ground that if one minister refuses, another next door, or a justice of the peace, will perform the ceremony. About two-thirds will marry divorced strangers. Those who decline to do so give as the reason that it is impossible to determine who are worthy of marriage. The question of guilt or innocence seems to be confused rather hopelessly with the question of likelihood of forming a satisfactory marriage in the future. General standards, such as the Biblical (modified), are followed rather blindly, when they are followed, without much attempt to secure facts beyond those offered in the court record, and with almost no thought of the welfare of the persons concerned, or of social conditions and needs. The confusion of practice and theory at this point is characterized by an almost total lack of ethical consideration.

It is not the intention of this study to separate problems of ethics from problems of social welfare, although primary emphasis

¹¹*The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.*, 1924, pp. 101-102.

is placed on the location of responsibility rather than on the definition of specific social policies. In the matter of marriage the church has traditionally regarded itself as upholding a high standard of relationship. Has it been shifting to other shoulders the burden of responsibility for defining this standard and for guarding its observance? Whether the urgency of an ethical issue is derived from the urgency of the social issues involved or from the violations of traditional or rational standards, in either case the facts presented in this chapter point to the existence of attitudes and practices which are rather desperately in need of re-examination.

The first issue that emerges is whether the ministry is under obligation to question afresh the consequences of following a traditional practice. Is it ethical for them to question their authorities? Is it ethical for them not to do so, if there is evidence that the chief ends of religion are being thwarted by strict observance of any given standard?

The second issue relates to the apparent indifference of large numbers of clergymen to the whole problem of marriage, as shown by their attitude toward divorced persons as well as by the neglect of considerations of fitness and of the need for preparation for the marriage relation. Is the law or general public opinion the criterion to be followed, or has the minister a duty toward the elevation of legal standards? Can this duty be discharged by preaching or other verbal support of high standards, or is the minister's own practice involved?

A third issue that will appear at many points in this report is the effect of fees upon practice and viewpoints. To what extent are decisions, supposedly disinterested, determined by economic considerations?

The fourth issue revolves around the question of a professional code. The pastors consulted seemed to feel that they could not deal with the problems of marriage and divorce without concerted action by the whole Protestant group. Does co-operation, then, become an ethical problem?

Possibilities for Solving the Problem

The clergy recognize that the marriage situation is far from ideal, but tend to justify their present practice on the ground that they are unable to wield any influence in bringing about such a change. The whole problem, as they see it, is closely interwoven with legal procedure and until there is more uniformity in the laws of the state, they feel the minister will be ineffective. For example:

Unless there is co-operation on the part of the laws of the state the minister is powerless to do very much. It is almost impossible to harmonize the laws of New York, which grant a divorce for the cause of adultery only, with the laws of Nevada, where practically no standard exists.

The opinion is also expressed that the ministers must arrive at some uniform practice if they would make their efforts felt. One man says, "I would covet some agreement between ministers of the local association or union by which such practices would become more nearly uniform and dependable. Others voice the opinion that only by the united stand of the whole of Protestantism can the problem be met. Cases in point are given:

I am more convinced that only a united stand by all branches of the church upon the basic requirements of fitness for marriage will ever remedy the evils that now exist. To-day if one clergyman refuses to marry a couple another will do it.

It is a pity that the Protestant churches are not united in some definite uniform practice in the marriage of divorced persons. This is a matter where the church and not the individual clergyman should speak out and establish a rule by which all ministers must abide.

We absolutely cannot solve this evil until the ministers of all branches of the church get together on some common standard.

Such comments reflect the attitude that little can be done by the

individual pastor. There is some feeling, however, that the clergy could exert some influence if an effort were made, but that they are not making use of available opportunities. One states that "the pastor can do something about getting better laws by working through the pulpit and through his influence on civic affairs." Another says: "I have become convinced that the minister can do much more than is ordinarily done towards preparing his young people for successful marriage."

A comparison of these comments with the challenge presented in the statement of the Federal Council Commission quoted at the beginning of this chapter leaves one with a depressing sense of anticlimax.

Chapter II

SOCIAL AND CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS

The evolution and popularity of social creeds or declarations of ideals may be taken as evidence that a considerable proportion of official American Christendom feels called upon to make the voice of the church heard on the great social questions confronting the world. What do the rank and file of ministers of various denominations feel about this, and what do they do about it? Although we shall not attempt solutions of the problems raised by this survey of practice and opinion, it is hoped that a frank facing of issues may lead to a clarification of motives.

Ambiguities with regard to ethical responsibility arise from the fact that a minister is called upon to play at least four rôles at the same time. He is the representative of a particular form of religion with its own standards and its own interpretations of the function of religion in society. He is a citizen in the community, sharing with other citizens the responsibilities of local and national democratic government. He is the employee of a particular institution and as such is engaged to perform specified services usually for a specified wage. And finally, he is himself—a man with private convictions, private responsibilities and ambitions, and a sense of duty to God which at moments of crisis may displace his sense of duty to his fellowmen.

It is not to be expected, therefore, that the practice and opinions of ministers regarding social and civic issues should show anything but diversity and contradiction. Nor should it be a matter of surprise that individual ministers, confronted with conflicting obligations, should reach different conclusions as to what is the ethical course to pursue. The minister, it may be presumed, wants

to be honest with himself, with his employers, with his ecclesiastical superiors, with his religious tradition. If he finds it impossible to reconcile these various obligations in his overt actions, he may be pardoned for attempting to do so in his imagination or by restricting his professional interest to those areas of life which involve him in no controversies.

As pointed out in the preceding chapter, our primary interest is not the wisdom of adopting this or that attitude, but rather the ethical issues involved in the effort to discover what is wise and to adopt it as a guiding principle for personal conduct. Wisdom and ethics are twin sisters. But sometimes Prudence, though only a distant relative, masquerades as one or the other and causes endless confusion and embarrassment among their suitors.

METHODS OF EXPRESSING SOCIAL AND CIVIC CONSCIOUSNESS

The numerous ways taken by ministers to express their sense of social and civic responsibility may be classified in three groups. In the first group we find the pulpit being used for preaching the Gospel and laying down Christian principles. The message is applied to political, social, and economic problems by way of general reference. Party questions or controversial issues, however, are avoided and specific political measures are not suggested. Rights of citizenship, such as voting, are also exercised. In the second group of practices, not only is social and industrial life mentioned in a general way, but specific questions involving controversial issues are discussed. Speakers from various groups such as socialist, communist, and labor unions are also brought either into the pulpit or before organizations of the church, in order that people may understand present-day conditions and the social theories offered as possible solutions. In the third type of practice the minister takes more direct and concrete action, such as speaking for particular candidates, working for labor unions by giving moral encouragement or aiding strikers, and striving for social

justice in the community by making investigations of industrial conditions.

These three procedures will be discussed in turn.

Preaching the Gospel

The first practice, laying down general Christian principles and making application to social and industrial life by occasional reference, seems to be quite prevalent. Almost three-fourths (71.5 per cent) say they discuss political issues in the pulpit when a moral issue is involved, and an even larger number (90 p.c.) deal with social and economic questions. While it is true that some of this group treat such problems rather directly and completely, the evidence seems to indicate that the majority do so only indirectly and in a general manner. In support of this conclusion, many comments added to the questionnaires might be quoted. A typical statement is that they are mentioned merely "as a concrete manifestation of sin in human relationships." Further evidence for this inference lies in the fact that less than half of the clergy reported definite topics preached upon during the preceding year (1932-3), and, as will be explained in more detail later, probably many of these refer to such topics only occasionally. It seems evident, then, that more than half follow the first practice of treating social and civic issues by occasional reference only.

In explanation of this limitation of preaching on political and social issues to occasional general reference, the view is expressed that such matters should be dealt with only when a moral problem is involved, and that controversial issues should be avoided if possible. As one minister put it:

I steer clear as much as possible from political questions except as it is unavoidable. No party question is allowable in the pulpit. There are broad moral issues when no doubt the church ought to be heard and no doubt has a remedy. In all such cases I do believe it is our privilege and our duty. We must always remember that we are ambassadors of Christ

and only that which is in harmony with this should be preached.

Discussing Controversial Issues

The second type of practice, although probably not as prevalent as the first, is followed to a considerable extent. In this practice, questions involving controversial issues are discussed in the pulpit in more specific terms than in the former procedure. Any conditions which affect life, say these men, should be the concern of the minister. Some think a more adequate facing of such issues is the only hope for the political situation.

I feel we were not given enough definite instruction in the seminary regarding these vital issues. I gave such matters little thought at that time, and thought that it was the duty of the minister to preach "the Bible" and not to deal definitely with these matters. I have come to feel that the economic and social problems are of paramount importance and that the church can no longer remain silent regarding them if it desires to be a real power for good in the years to come. The pulpit must speak out.

Others feel that it is necessary to deal with social and civic questions more adequately, but on different grounds. They are convinced the so-called "simple Gospel" does not suffice, and that a study of prophetic preaching and the Scriptures requires one to be concerned in these matters.

Some who favor a more definite facing of these issues are aware of the danger of speaking upon subjects that are not thoroughly understood, but they are persuaded that "today it is possible for clergymen to make a personal study of some phase of industrial life and speak with authority upon it," and they consider it their obligation to do so.

Almost half the men (47.4 per cent) listed problems of a political nature upon which they preached during the year preceding (1932-3) and 40 p.c. mentioned social and economic questions. These questions show that a rather wide range of issues is dis-

cussed by this group of ministers. A partial list is presented to indicate the scope.

- Prohibition; City politics and Tammany Hall investigation

- Responsibility of independent voters, with particular reference to Norman Thomas

- Activities of Committee of 1000 (Seabury investigation)

- Socialism; Communism; Fascism; Peace; War debts; League of Nations

- World Court; Democracy; War; Tariff; Child Labor Law

- Length of working days and weeks; Law enforcement

- World citizenship rather than nationalism; Veterans' Bureau; Economics

- Roosevelt's New Deal and the necessary faith; Professor Macintosh—Citizenship

- Investigation of the banking situation and a banker's moral trust

- Sweat shops in Connecticut

- Fair wages, fair prices, healthy working conditions, honorable service

- A better economic order with profit motive eliminated or at least controlled

- Coal fields; Minimum wage; Labor unions; Stock-market gambling

- Scottsboro trial; Various strike situations; Christianity and the race problem

- The miners' plight; The struggling farmer

It should be understood, however, that not all men reporting have dealt with many of the above issues. In many cases prohibition was the only subject mentioned, and in others war and peace were given as the only topics preached upon. It seems apparent that many of those who have listed only one or two topics do no more than make occasional reference to them in the pulpit.

Another way by which ministers have brought such issues before their people more adequately is by procuring speakers from various social groups, such as socialist, communist, labor

union. About one-eighth (12.6 per cent) have followed this procedure.

There is an immense amount of criticism, however, of using the pulpit for discussing social and civic questions in any specific manner. One objection is based upon the belief that the goal aimed at will not be reached by the method of direct discussion. The only solution to political and social problems, these critics say, is to convert individuals through the preaching of the Gospel. Their convictions are represented in these statements:

They will be solved only through the regeneration of the individual by the Holy Spirit acting through the Word and Sacraments.

Teach the Gospel of brotherhood and the Golden Rule. The preacher cannot assume the rôle of manager of business concerns about which he knows next to nothing. Lay down general principles to govern Christian conduct.

I am convinced that amelioration of socio-economic conditions will be realized only through the lives of those who know the mind of Christ and have his spirit.

I have come to see that political issues may be influenced more by personal means than by speeches. It is poor policy to pound on these things until folk become angry. One must have faith in the Christian character of his people and work sympathetically on that.

Further objection is raised on the ground that these questions are controversial and divisive, and that it is unfair to talk on debatable issues without giving the people a chance to express themselves. It is felt that some ministers have tried to force their ideas upon the congregation and that people have lost respect for them. A better place to discuss controversial questions, they feel, is in meetings or organizations or in forums where people can present their views. The attitude of this group is represented in the following comments:

The congregation has no chance to "talk back," hence pul-

pit privileges should be kept above reproach in order to command respect.

For all questions that are controversial or that involve political or economic issues, a forum or discussion group, where all shades of opinion can find expression, is much better than a church service in which the minister only has expression. It is not fair to talk to people on disputable matters, when the people have no opportunity to answer, or to ask questions.

I think too many "social-minded" ministers take too advanced a stand on social questions and try to force their people in line. Such questions are divisive and the church is for all honest-thinking people. I like to have all views represented in my membership and to encourage honest, fearless, thinking.

Similar criticism comes from men who have preached the social gospel in the past and who still hold that the church's voice should be heard on such matters. However, they have found treatment of these issues in the pulpit unsatisfactory.

We quote at length from a professor in one of the seminaries who adequately states this viewpoint:

If a man has to announce his convictions in the pulpit, it should be done always against the background of fundamental religious principles, and with as little controversy as possible. I am coming to feel more and more that our Protestant churches are losing hold of the people as regards their desire for worship. Our stress on ethics and the social gospel has resulted in sermons no longer being a part of worship. They are too critical and analytical. Sermons must be against a background of God. One hears sermons now and then in which God is not mentioned. That is not worship. I feel people must hear something in church which they cannot hear anywhere else. We sometimes forget that fundamentally people have come to worship. I preached the social gospel in my ministry but found it a problem to keep the worship atmosphere and at the same time take up controversial issues.

We will lose our congregations altogether if we don't give them this other source of strength.

The question is, should we give them the social message in the pulpit or elsewhere? There are plenty of opportunities elsewhere. I am getting back to Biblical preaching after being away from it for years. It gives us authority. That is necessary for worship. In our ministry we must give a big note to God and His demands and then make applications.

Still further criticism by these clergy is that men are wrestling "with problems they cannot handle and rarely understand." As a result, one man suggests that a pastor should not speak "except from personal knowledge of a given case."

Again, the most serious charge to be made against "social-minded" ministers, say some, is that they have "neglected Christ" to preach social panaceas. The inevitable consequence is that "the power of the pulpit has lessened." One says, in addressing himself to this point, that perhaps social issues should be considered and an attempt made to solve them, but never "at the expense of withholding the message of salvation from the parishioners."

Direct Action

The third course of conduct, that of engaging in more direct action, is far from general. Only 10.5 per cent declare themselves from the pulpit for particular candidates who represent their views on political matters.

A typical comment:

I believe we should deal with moral issues, and that when those issues are personalized in certain individuals, we have a right to mention their names.

It may not be a common procedure even among this group, however, to announce the stand they propose to take with reference to political aspirants. One man states that he has done it only once and that was for Norman Thomas. Probably the most general practice of ministers is that of the man who says, "I refuse to

“speak for candidates even when requested by members of my church to do so.”

A few men (7 per cent) express themselves for candidates in public meetings, but not in the pulpit, while almost half (45 p.c.) speak for certain aspirants for public office in private conversation. Many seem to feel that a different principle is involved in the two practices of making pronouncements from the pulpit and speaking in private. In the former they are assuming the rôle of a minister, but in the latter they are acting as citizens. Some state, though, that it is impossible for many parishioners to see this distinction. To them he is just as much a minister in private conversation as when speaking from the pulpit.

The clergy also express their social consciousness directly and concretely by supporting what they term the exploited groups of the community. This conduct is far from universal, however. Only 14 per cent say they encourage labor unions in their territory. A very much smaller number (1.3 p.c.) state that their church as an organization gave financial aid to strikers during the years 1932-33, and only .6 p.c. of the churches contributed other than financial assistance to striking groups. Apparently one reason why so few have supported labor unions is because they are not agreed that it is an ethical practice. Of all the ministers reporting, 19 p.c. consider the practice ethical, 29 p.c. say it is unethical, and 51 p.c. state that it depends upon the circumstances of a particular case.

Victims of race prejudice belong to another exploited group which receives slight assistance. A few churches (3.3 per cent) gave financial aid and 1.6 p.c. helped otherwise by holding “special meetings in the interest of racial understanding.” One minister writes, “We are on good terms with Jewish and Negro neighbors, have them for speakers and contribute to Negro schools.”

The third practice of engaging in concrete action is likewise being followed by those who assist in investigating working conditions in their community. A few men (6 per cent) have shared

in such investigations and the small list below indicates the types of industry into which inquiry has been made.

- Woolen manufacturing
- Electrical manufacturing
- Brass manufacturing
- Cotton manufacturing
- A spinning mill at time of strike
- Coal fields
- Lumber camp conditions in certain towns in western Washington
- Textile strike
- Miners' union in the anthracite region
- Unemployment relief.

Ministers, in most instances, wish to avoid becoming partisans in such investigations. Their attitude is represented in the following statement:

I visit the factories and shops personally, and aim to help both sides to get along together, for their own mutual benefit; and wherever I am convinced my personal efforts are desirable for the benefit of all parties concerned, I do whatever is possible in the situation. A pastor should be a helper of all parties, not a partisan but a friend.

It should be remembered that not all of the clergy are in communities where these problems exist. One says, "There are no factories or labor unions in the country." Another states, "I have never served a church located in such a community—or where such problems arise."

Some are in sympathy with direct action but have failed to do much about it. One pastor says, "I feel more than I practice in this matter."

As already noted, only a small number of the clergy deal with social problems in a concrete manner, and several objections are raised by others against the practice. Some are of the opinion that there is no necessity for direct participation, nor is such action any concern of the church. "I preach the Gospel, including its social

applications. That, in my limited experience, has been all there has seemed call or opportunity to do."

Others refuse to take part for the reason that opposition would be aroused in their congregation, in which case it is felt the minister should not become involved. One clergyman says, "The most influential people of this church would strenuously object if their minister should openly side with the workers in any concrete economic struggle." "I favor this," says another, "but only once have I been able to do it without too much offence to my church."

DENOMINATIONAL VARIATIONS

Mention has been made of the multiple rôle the minister plays and of the dilemmas to which he is subjected in his effort to serve more than one master. The variations in practice and attitudes so far discussed occur within every denomination, in spite of historic differences in the attitudes of certain groups. The Lutheran and Episcopal clergy, for example, seem to show less social and civic activity than representatives of other churches. This apparently reflects to some degree the historical background of these church bodies, which have generally accepted the state as divinely ordained but as operating in a separate sphere from that of the church.

The Lutheran Church today seems to stress rather strongly the principle of the separation of church and state. This view is taught in at least one of the two Lutheran seminaries co-operating in this study¹ and apparently influences measurably the practice of the clergy. Those who are attempting to follow this principle believe one should preach the Gospel and that civic betterment will come as a result of this positive message of Christian citizenship. Their viewpoint upon this matter is represented in the following statements:

When I graduated, there was an idea in my mind that the church was old-fashioned in its views on political questions.

¹From an interview with the professor of practical theology in that seminary.

I followed the general practice as a matter of duty, until some well-meaning but misguided pulpit politician pulled a few fast ones, and what had been a duty became a joy. The church must have a greater faith in her positive message of Christian citizenship, and meddling in political affairs will be unnecessary.

I was taught "separation of church and state." My view has not changed. It has strengthened, so as not to besmirch the church by feeding people anything but Gospel.

Of course, there is a considerable range of opinion among Lutheran clergymen on this question, but the majority voices strong opposition to the practice of taking direct action in political matters on the ground that this lowers the dignity of the church and that such questions should be left to the state.

Alternative views, consequently, must be entertained and expressed against both the tradition and the weight of contemporary judgment.

Possibly the most significant fact to be noted in this connection is just this existence of individual variation. No tradition binds all to one view of the nature of the church. Each man may make up his own mind, and is therefore under strict obligation to do so in the light of such knowledge of Christian truth and practice as he can acquire. Without either the guidance of established ecclesiastical polity or the convictions of his own informed conscience, the minister is left in a position peculiarly susceptible to the demands which the church he serves may make upon him in his rôle of employee. Does such pressure exist, and if so, is the minister aware of it?

INFLUENCE OF PRESSURE FROM CONGREGATION

As a matter of fact, the message of the pulpit as characteristically delivered meets with little interference. Some (13 per cent) assert that their church objects to their speaking from the pulpit on political questions, but others state that "when a clear moral issue

is involved there is no objection." An even smaller number (2.8 p.c.) indicate that discussion of social and economic issues draws criticism from the church. The most prevalent comments of pastors are to the effect that they "have never had any difficulties in this regard," and that they "never feel restrained in any way." It should be remembered throughout this discussion, however, that the treatment of controversial issues in the pulpit is avoided by the majority of clergymen, so that criticism is not likely to arise.

There is some objection to the minister's becoming a member of a political party. The questionnaire returns show that 1.7 per cent have felt such opposition. The criticism occurs apparently when the pastor connects himself with such a group as the socialist. None of the clergy reported opposition to their becoming members of the old line parties.

The men indicate also that members of the church as individuals attempt to restrain the utterances of the pastor in the pulpit or they try to prevent his activities when controversial issues are involved. About a tenth (9.8 per cent) say this is true in the case of political matters and almost as many (8.5 p.c.) feel such pressure when dealing with social and economic questions. When we realize that only a minority of the clergy discuss controversial matters, it is apparent that criticism would probably be much more prevalent if a larger body of ministers handled such issues.

There is further evidence to the effect that as the action in which the minister engages becomes more direct and concrete, criticism increases. Fifteen per cent state that their church objects to having speakers from such groups as communists, socialists, and labor unions. A still larger number (19 p.c.) assert that their church objects to their speaking from the pulpit for particular candidates. An additional group indicate that pressure would be felt if they attempted either of the above practices. Since few men actually participate in direct action, it seems clear that when such practice is followed criticism nearly always results.

This does not necessarily mean, however, that when pressure

is brought to bear upon the minister he must thereupon discontinue his activity or lose his position. Those most active in social and political affairs are convinced that it is possible to take part in these matters and still retain their church. One of this number sums up the thought of the group when he says, "My own conviction is that 50 per cent of one's ability to be radical and keep his job is a matter of pedagogy." Concerning the use of the pulpit, this same group maintains that people have some rights in the matter and declare that the minister is usually at fault when there is difficulty. The following comments illustrate this position:

The trouble comes when ministers ride a hobby. Some men end every speech with a tirade against the sweat shops. During the war a certain preacher ended every sermon with a tirade against the Kaiser. I don't ride these questions but think they need to be raised.

I tell my people I accept no restrictions in the pulpit and demand the right to express my convictions at least once on any question. I don't believe one should be a monotone, always driving on one subject.

There is a further danger, though, which the pastor must consider when taking a stand upon social and economic questions. It is that which comes from officials of the church body. A Methodist pastor who is active on all social matters points out the undercurrent of pressure which arises from this source. He says:

There is some subtle work among higher officials of the church. Two-thirds of the bishops would be prejudiced against me and would be afraid I might cause disturbance in their territory. After one is successful in a couple of pastorates he can get along, but it would be difficult for a young man if he should become branded as a trouble maker.

FACTS AND ISSUES

While most of the clergy deal with social and economic issues in the pulpit, the replies indicate that they do so indirectly, in a

general way and only occasionally. Controversial issues are sometimes dealt with, and speakers representing various social and political groups, such as communists, socialists, and labor unions, are brought before the congregation or some part of it. About 13 per cent of our respondents have followed this procedure.

The treatment of specific and concrete issues is severely condemned by those who feel that the way to solve social and economic problems is by converting individuals through the preaching of the Gospel. These hold that direct discussion does not achieve the desired results, is divisive, and is unfair unless people have a chance to debate the issues raised in the pulpit. They claim further that such matters are not understood by the clergy and that there is a tendency to neglect Christ for social panaceas. All this militates against an atmosphere of worship.

Direct action is rare. Only about 11 per cent declare themselves for particular candidates, and this only occasionally. Nearly half speak for candidates in private conversation. About 14 p.c. encourage labor unions. About 1 p.c. state that their church gave financial aid to strikers during 1932-33, and less than 1 p.c. contributed any other service to striking groups. Opinions differ as to the ethics of supporting unions, 19 p.c. saying it is ethical, 29 p.c. unethical, and 51 p.c. saying that it depends on the case. Victims of race prejudice receive slight assistance.

It might seem appropriate for those preaching the principles of social justice to demonstrate to church and community something of how to make practical application of these principles. Should they attempt the one without the other? A considerable number discuss controversial issues at least occasionally, but very few give definite expression of their preaching by taking part in the economic struggle of exploited classes.

To what extent pressure is exerted or acts as an unconscious threat is not known, for the simple reason that few ministers discuss problems in such a way as to arouse opposition from any group and still fewer do anything that would be objectionable to

their parishioners. Why should they? Would it be helpful if ministers could be freed from economic dependence on the local congregation?

The answer proposed is that they should at least discuss social problems if moral issues are involved. But what constitutes a moral issue? Does the existence of an established policy of church isolation relieve one of responsibility? How does one decide whether the function of religion is only to hand down a body of revealed truth or is to include the interpretation of religion in terms of present-day needs? Is private judgment to be followed as to what constitutes a moral issue, or should the pastor as a representative of a church or the employee of a congregation yield his judgment at this point and follow the tradition or the desires of his flock? If his own judgment is final, what are the criteria for deciding when a social or civic issue is a moral issue? It would seem that this is an almost virgin territory in the thought of church leaders and that no satisfactory solution of the minister's ethical dilemmas is likely to be forthcoming without considerably more discussion and study of such matters than has characterized theological training in the past.

Chapter III

COMMUNITY SERVICE

In the preceding chapter the ethical ambiguities arising from the need of filling conflicting rôles have been illustrated from the practice and opinions of ministers relating to broad social and civic responsibilities. This chapter may be regarded as a brief footnote in which the bearing of this controversy on the more immediate tasks of community service is made apparent. Here the conflict focuses particularly on the problem of how the minister is to spend his time. Is he the servant of his congregation or of the community? Is he under obligation to give all his time to the congregation or board by which he is paid, or has he also a direct responsibility with regard to the community as a whole irrespective of his source of income? Is it his duty to assume leadership in community activities and serve the needs of all in his locality, or should he confine his services to those within his parish group? The minister's views on this question may determine his practice or may merely leave him in a state of ethical unrest because he feels the pull of duties and desires which circumstances compel him to ignore.

If there is any field where co-operation would seem to be called for as a means of emancipation from an ethical impasse, this would seem to be one. Nevertheless, co-operation in and for community service seems not yet to be a part of an effective code. As a result there are several areas of human need about which religion does little or nothing.

CONTRASTING VIEWS

Three possible positions are assumed regarding the relationship of the clergy to the community. At the one extreme is that of

the minister who considers himself hired by a church to serve the people of that particular organization. According to this view, the pastor is being supported to meet the spiritual needs of his people and he has no right to bestow his efforts upon others in the community.

At the other extreme is the conception of the congregation as a group of people interested in ministering to the community. They are supporting the pastor as their leader in this service and as their representative in civic activities. This means he should be interested in and give attention to any project for the uplift of community life, even though this may interfere with his giving attention to the personal needs of some individuals in the congregation.

The majority of the clergy, however, would not subscribe to either of these views. They feel that the relationship of the minister to the church and community lies somewhere in the middle ground and that perhaps certain elements of both attitudes should be present. His primary responsibility, most men hold, is to the congregation, not merely because the minister is hired by them, but for the reason that he renders his best service to the public by serving his own group well.

These various attitudes may be illustrated by these three comments:

The church is my primary responsibility. I serve the community through the church.

In the smaller districts the preacher has the responsibility for the whole community. He can take any place in civic life that he desires or is capable of taking and he ought to have a civic interest. The smaller community still looks to the minister as its leader. He has more influence than any other man. I have more influence in . . . than the big preacher does in the downtown church in . . . The old-time minister was the only educated man in the community and this is still true here in . . . I have taken an active part in the politics of the town.

The minister is not simply hired by the church to give service to other people. Members of the church also need attention. If a pastor has a large parish as I have, he has his hands full giving service to his people. If over and above that he has time and strength to enter into other phases of community life, well and good. I am serving the community when I serve the church. I don't look upon myself as their hired servant. Our people are part of the community. They need help, service, counsel, advice, ministry and in sufficient amount to get most of my time.

Many men admit that a minister's career and livelihood are more dependent upon the success he achieves in his congregation than upon his work in community affairs. This likewise may have a bearing upon the general attitude of placing the congregation foremost. One pastor states, "I feel my first duty is to care for those in my parish. They make it possible for me to live. So far as the minister's own life fortune goes, I feel if he fails there he fails seriously." A second says that he "gets his bread and butter by virtue of the fact that he is servant of the church."

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

These points of view are rather general. It will be well to point out how they operate in terms of specific activities. For illustration we shall take participation in community organizations, calling on the unchurched, conducting funerals for the unchurched, institutional calling, and aid to underprivileged groups.

Participation in Community Organizations

As already noted most ministers believe that the needs of the congregation should occupy first place in the demands made upon a pastor's time. This attitude is reflected in almost every phase of ministerial work which touches community life. It will be considered first in connection with those of his activities which concern civic organizations.

The clergyman receives many calls to deliver addresses before service clubs and other organized groups. He is likewise petitioned to serve on special committees dealing with the general welfare of the people. Ought he to respond to all invitations or should the time which would be consumed in such activity be devoted to his parish? Many consider it not incumbent upon them to answer these requests if to do so jeopardizes congregational work. Typical comments follow:

Ought the minister to be running around to Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, Community Chests, etc.? The community often takes it for granted that the minister has nothing to do but run errands. The ministry ought to be a full-time job. I do not think ministers should be more available than doctors or lawyers. My greatest contribution lies in what I can do in this parish.

You have the responsibility to do community work, but you do not have to be at the call of every "Tom, Dick, and Harry." The minister must be a community man and be willing to help, but he must not dissipate his strength and be a "flat tire" on the Lord's Day. When he comes into the pulpit, he should be prepared.

Some who give allegiance to this principle of "church first and community next," go to the extreme of refusing practically all calls for general public service. "I try to confine activities to my church," says one man. A second states, "I have many other invitations. As a rule I do not accept them. I don't mean to be unfriendly, but my first duty is to the people of my church." A Methodist whose general conversation signified a strong desire to make good in the eyes of the bishop, has this to say: "I almost refuse to go outside of my church to give other talks. You can't make a success of your church if you run here and there."

There are other ministers, however, who apparently agree in theory with the above principles, but in practice they never refuse

any request for service which comes from the community. We quote a case in point:

I have let myself into the whole life of I have given a lot of time and strength to things which should not have been asked of me, but I have done it anyway. I have never refused service to any one who asks. I never refuse to speak to any group if I am requested to do so.

One can imagine the state of mind of a man who thus allows himself to be torn to pieces by conflicting obligations.

Calling on the Unchurched

Another opportunity of rendering service to the public is through calling upon unchurched persons. The questionnaire returns show that whereas 77 per cent of the ministers attempt to visit all their members at least once a year, 44 p.c. call regularly upon people who are not church members. Comments accompanying the questionnaire indicate that the chief reason for these visits is to secure members. Thus the clergy apparently are thinking primarily of building their churches. However, according to their own view, the development of a strong congregation is the most effective way in which to help the community.

Almost all pastors (93 per cent) call upon those who are not members of the church if there is a need, and in some cases ministers visit the unchurched sick even though they have not been requested to do so. The latter is especially true in the community church district, where the pastor readily hears of an illness and feels a responsibility for all in his territory. "I am responsible for the community," says one of these men who is thinking in terms of visiting the sick. Another states, "Half of my work is for those folks who are not church members. I am responsible for visiting the unchurched sick." In other instances the pastor awaits the request of the person, but if called for, the service is usually performed. A typical comment is, "I would not refuse a non-member any definite service." If a conflict arises between two calls, how-

ever, one from a church member and the other from an unchurched person, the member ordinarily will receive first attention.

Conducting Funerals for the Unchurched

Still another type of community service the clergy are asked to perform is that of conducting funerals for persons who are not members of a church. When such help is sought, ministers usually respond. This is true whether the appeal comes from the undertaker or from others. Some men even inform the undertakers they will officiate wherever there is need. Occasionally during the interviews, however, the clergy made remarks concerning the unfairness of many of these people. The time and effort of a minister is accepted by such persons, but sometimes they do not give an honorarium sufficient to cover his expenses, and they may not say even a word of appreciation. It was not uncommon to hear ministers state that "these are the persons who demand most and yet have no claim upon our time." The comment seems to suggest that many pastors feel they have no responsibility to conduct funerals for the unchurched, and that only church members really have a right to demand their time. Yet, as stated previously, when calls come the clergy ordinarily respond.

There are a few men, nevertheless, who refuse to officiate at funerals of non-members when the request originates with the undertaker. This again brings to the front the attitude of placing the church first and the community next. We quote from one of these men:

I don't care about burying all sorts of people. While at . . . I believe I turned down as many funerals of non-members as I buried. It is a waste of time. I usually do not accept the calls of undertakers. I haven't time to bury some person who never took an interest in the church. Such work might take two or three afternoons a week if one responded! To do this would be wrong even though the preacher received some money which he seldom does. People who request the

undertaker to get a preacher never go back to the church again until they die, or another relative dies! The bigger the church the more it is necessary to turn down these outside funerals. For example, the . . . Church has three ministers. They turn down every outside funeral. They have a visitation schedule which requires each minister to be out every afternoon unless he has a funeral. Each minister takes his turn for these burials.

Institutional Calling

Another type of aid rendered in the community by the clergyman is that of calling at institutions such as charity hospitals, old folks' homes, orphanages, and jails. The general disregard of this work once more seems to reflect the viewpoint that the major responsibility of the minister is to his own people. While 69 per cent call in charity hospitals, old folks' homes, and orphanages, if members of their church are inmates, only 18 p.c. visit in these institutions regularly if none of their members are present.

The situation in regard to jail visitation shows an even greater neglect of the unchurched person. Whereas 54 per cent call in jails if any of their church members are occupants,¹ only 4.5 p.c. call regularly when none of their members are there.

This lack of attention would not seem quite so startling if the institutional ministration were adequately cared for under denominational or interdenominational auspices. Only 18 per cent, however, report that their denomination does such work, and 24.6 p.c. state that the activity is carried on co-operatively by various denominations.² In many cases the last two figures over-

¹One is tempted to ask whether half the ministers really do have members of their churches in jail; or whether this assertion of willingness to call is rather an expression of a feeling of obligation concerning which (fortunately) it is not necessary to do anything.

²The Lutherans seem to carry on institutional work as a denomination to a greater extent than do other church bodies. Fifty per cent of Gettysburg men and 43 p.c. of Mt. Airy men report that their denomination does such work in their communities. Episcopalians are also above the average, 30 p.c. of the Berkeley men stating that their church body engages in this activity in their locality. The remaining groups run: Presbyterian 11 p.c., Baptist 8 p.c., Congregational 7 p.c., Methodist 5 p.c.

lap, *i.e.*, institutional visitation is done in the same city by both denominational and interdenominational groups. This means that in an even larger number of localities the work is left undone. Of course 40 p.c. of these ministers are located in villages or towns of five thousand population and under, which may indicate that there are no such institutions in some of the communities. An occasional comment is made to that effect.

The view that there is general failure to fulfill this obligation, however, is further supported by the testimony of clergymen in the interviews and by their remarks on the questionnaires. A number of reasons are given for the omission. In the first place, the men indicate that their time is taken up in serving their own congregation. A typical statement of this attitude follows: "I was taught to be in such places wherever there is need, but I become preoccupied with the needs of my own people which seem ever present."

In the second place, ministers say that calls for help are so numerous and they become engaged in such a variety of projects that some things are bound to be overlooked. A pastor states the situation in these words: "One is liable to get into so many activities in this city that he does nothing. There are more opportunities for service than we are able to fill. I am always trying to do more different things than I am able to carry through."

A third reason for the present status of institutional calling is that some pastors believe they do not have an individual responsibility to do the work, but feel it is a project which ministers should undertake co-operatively. Others are undecided in the matter. A case in point is given: "If any one is there whom I know, I call. I might have a responsibility for others—I do not know."

A fourth reason that jail visitation, in particular, is inadequately cared for, is that some men consider themselves incapable of doing it properly, since they have not had special training for this type of ministry. Observations of clergymen follow:

I feel myself measurably adequate to the situation in charitable organizations, but not in the jail work, unless I know the persons. The jails seem to demand rather expert diagnosis and therapy in both moral and mental realms.

I call a great deal in hospitals but not so much in jails. My calling there is not very satisfactory.

Jail work requires definite training. The average church like my own is not equipped for this activity, and the minister does not have the technique. But the Lutheran Church does try to support trained workers in the large cities, through the Inner Mission.

A fifth cause for the clergy's failure to measure up to this responsibility seems to lie in the lack of co-operation among Protestant churches and in their poor organization. Two comments supporting this statement are rather typical.

I have found pastoral care of institutions very poorly organized in the communities where I have served. There is great need for the Protestant churches to plan this work in such a way that each individual in every institution is personally cared for. The Roman Church is miles ahead of us in this. I rarely find any institution in which they do not visit regularly and effectively.

Protestant churches are weak in co-operating in this work. I have repeatedly tried to get better organized co-operation.

Another who notes how inadequately the task is done by Protestants suggests a change in the method of supervision:

I believe our Protestant institutional work is poorly organized. It should be intelligently directed from the state and national federations, through the appointment of specially trained men, and not left to local responsibility.

Even where ministers call in jails, some of them are apparently afraid to exert real personal effort. One says, "I have never sought private conversation with men in jail." Another in speaking of

his own procedure states, "It is general calling. In hospitals it is more particular or specific."

There is also a difference of opinion among pastors as to whether they have a personal responsibility to do institutional visiting in addition to the organized activity that is done under denominational or interdenominational auspices. On the one side is the man who says, "I would call if it were not for the fact that the hospital committee of our Pastors' Association does this efficiently." The opposite view is as follows:

Is this calling the duty of the individual pastor or should it be a co-operative task? We have our Lutheran city mission and our missionary goes to these hospitals. But I feel I should go, too, as a free lance.

Aid to Underprivileged Groups

As organizations, churches are not supporting the cause of the underprivileged in any great measure, although certain types of service are widespread.³ Contributions have ranged from one-third of 1 per cent to 50 p.c. of the total budget. Most have given between 1 p.c. and 10 p.c. of their total expenditures for this purpose, the majority falling within the 2 p.c., 3 p.c., and 4 p.c. class. But almost all have shared in this work, even if only in a small way. Financial aid alone or financial together with other assistance has been given by 70 p.c. of the congregations to one or more underprivileged groups. A small number (8 p.c.) have not contributed any cash but have helped in some other manner. About one-fifth (21 p.c.) make no mention whatever of any tangible interest in these people.

It should be noted, of course, that these more unfortunate persons receive assistance not only from the church as an organization, but also from its members as individuals. Ministers indicate

³The benevolent program of the church is not included in the discussion that follows. From a study of the yearbooks of six general church bodies, it is discovered that from one-eighth to one-fifth of the total expenditures of the church go for benevolent purposes. In this study we are attempting to find to what extent ministers and churches feel responsible for the local community.

that their church serves the underprivileged of the community by inspiring members to work in organizations which are attempting to meet the needs of these groups. One pastor claims that "the presidents and leaders of the Red Cross, Community Chest, Boys' Clubs, Y. M. and Y. W. C. A.s, Hospitals, Old Folks' Homes, etc., etc., are found for the most part in his church."

On the other hand, some churches are so concerned about meeting their quota on the benevolent program of their denomination, that they will not assume any interest in the dire condition of local groups. The comment of a Presbyterian pastor illustrates this point: "The session refuse to give one cent of benevolence except to the Boards."

The poor and unemployed are sustained financially by 58 per cent of the congregations, and receive supplementary assistance from 29.5 p.c. The latter consists primarily of clothing, food, and work. Food, in some cases, is given only at Thanksgiving and Christmas time. These persons receive support from a larger number of churches than do any other underprivileged groups of the community. There is no doubt that members as individuals also contribute rather heavily to this cause.

Old folks are ministered to financially by 36 per cent of the churches and are served in other ways by 13 p.c. Orphans receive aid in money from 33 p.c. and are given additional service by 13 p.c. Assistance in addition to cash, in these cases, is made up of clothing, flowers, fruit, Christmas gifts, visitation, preaching services, etc. Approximately only half as many congregations contribute to these two groups as to the poor and unemployed.

Charity hospitals come next in line in terms of the number of churches contributing to their support. Funds for this purpose are given by 23 per cent and further aid by 9.6 p.c. The added assistance includes service, visitation, sewing by the women of the church, and support of local appeals.

Work for delinquents and prisoners is almost completely neglected. Six per cent of the churches state that they give money to

help the former group. A pastor comments upon this service and says his congregation has given "about \$250 to a boy on probation." Only 2 p.c. report supplementary service for delinquents. The latter is composed of "ministerial help" and "personal guidance and co-operation with legally established correctional societies." One church has established a Life Adjustment Center in which a staff of workers attempts to aid people in solving their problems. But apparently almost all pastors have omitted this field of possible usefulness.

Jail work is supported materially by 3.5 per cent of the congregations. This aid sometimes assumes the form of contributions "to persons just released." Help in other ways, such as personal ministration and conducting of services, is given by only 2.2 p.c. One man comments, "My board permits me to preach every three weeks for the State Reformatory." Another states that he has "investigated local conditions" of the jail. However, as was noted in the discussion under "Institutional Calling," the clergy feel incapable of ministering effectively in such institutions and it seems that very few have exerted any effort in this direction.

A similar neglect can be noted in regard to victims of race prejudice and men affected by strikes. It was pointed out in Chapter II that only 3.3 per cent report that cash contributions have been made for racial groups, while an even smaller number (1.6 p.c.) serve the cause in some other manner. Ministers indicate that "offerings" have been given "for educational purposes"; that "splendid Negro speakers" have been brought into the church; and that "conferences" have been held.

As was reported previously, churches support strikers even less, 1.3 per cent giving them financial aid and .6 p.c. helping in other ways. The fact that these racial and laboring classes are conflict groups may account somewhat for the small attention they receive. The clergy seem very hesitant about either sharing personally or requesting their churches to do so under such circumstances.

Whether ministers are as a class insensitive to the needs of these groups or whether they feel a conflict of duties at this point, is not known. In many instances, certainly, the explanation of neglect is the feeling that their first duty is to their own congregations. Especially is this noticeable with reference to aiding the poor and unemployed. "We try to look after our own first," says one man. Another states, "We take care of all of our own and a few who are not. It is quietly known in our church that none of our people are to go hungry. There is also city help to which we contribute as individuals though not as a church." The following comment, however, is highly pertinent:

By serving the church I am serving the community life. When I take care of the poor in the church I am assuming a load that otherwise would fall back upon others. This is a community service. Our church is criticized on this score, but I do not think it is fair. If every man could take care of his own group, it would be a great help.

FACTS AND ISSUES

It is true that ministers give a vast deal of service to their local communities. This usually takes the form of speaking for civic organizations, calling on the unchurched, and conducting funerals for the unchurched. Less frequently, and sometimes only in exceptional cases, do they call in hospitals, old folks' homes, orphanages, and jails, save on the members of their own churches. Still less do they lead their churches in service to delinquents, strikers, and victims of race prejudice. Only 2 per cent report co-operation with legally established correctional societies. The contributions of churches to the poor and underprivileged, however, particularly of their own number, are generous, over and above what individuals do in these causes.

It is assumed by most ministers that their chief obligation is to the members of their own churches and that work for others is secondary or even wholly unwarranted, some refusing to do anything whatever outside their churches.

This position poses an important problem of professional ethics. Is the minister an employee of a closed group which rightfully demands his entire time in return for his salary? Or is this attitude justified by the claim that the most effective method of ministering to the community is by serving the congregation efficiently? Or is this attitude to be partly accounted for by the alleged fact that the minister's own livelihood and progress are dependent upon his building a strong church organization?

Here, as in previous chapters, the problem of the minister's relation to his church tradition raises its head. Should these traditional views control his practice if current facts lead to alternative interpretations of duty? But perhaps the most serious problem concerns the seeming indifference of the clergy to needs to which religion might minister. The common claim that work among prisoners, delinquents, and underprivileged groups calls for special abilities and therefore for co-operative action would have greater weight if there were evidence that such needed co-operation existed or were even being attempted to any great extent. Would a professional code have anything to say about the responsibilities of ministers to the communities in which their churches are placed and from which they derive protection and support?

Chapter IV

THE MINISTER AND THE CHURCH

When church practices conflict with the ethical standards of the pastor, what is he to do? The minister is not a free lance, like a doctor, responsible only to his profession or to the public. He is a member of a denomination which has admitted him to a position of leadership on certain conditions, and an employee of a local institution which has an established tradition. Nor is it apparent that there are absolute standards of ethical practice to which he can turn for guidance. If there are, then large proportions of the ministry are unaware of them, or do not acknowledge their authority.

The relativity of ethical standards is nowhere more apparent than in matters of church finance. Here confusion reigns, for the scene is characterized by wide differences of practice and judgment. It is hard to discover a sound basis for the guidance of the minister's conduct toward his congregation under these circumstances. But there are also other areas of church life toward which the minister might be regarded as having an educational duty, such as the practice of the church in setting up and maintaining standards of church membership. Here there is less difference of opinion—in the sense that hardly any one ventures to do anything definite about violation of such standards. One might well ask what the ethical effect of having standards of admission is if no specific attention is paid to them once a candidate has been admitted.

In this chapter, these two problems as to how the minister is to interpret his responsibility to the church as an institution will be dealt with, and also, more briefly, certain questions concerning

the minister's freedom to act as an individual in the face of denominational and local pressures.

FINANCING THE CHURCH

It is not the purpose of this discussion to debate the relative practicability of various schemes for raising money. That is, how to raise the most money is not our problem, but how to finance the church without doing violence to the principles of human relationships for which the church stands. The minister is often looked to for guidance as to the most efficient means to employ. What is his responsibility for bringing the methods used into harmony with Christian ethics? To avoid mere abstractions, it is necessary for us to indicate the prevalence of various practices and the current views of ministers regarding them.

Some of the means used to secure funds for the local budget and benevolences are rated by the clergy as being Christian and as satisfactory under all circumstances. Others are regarded as open to objection but as permissible means because of certain non-economic benefits which accrue from their use. A third group is thought to be unchristian and therefore never justifiable. There is no agreement in this matter, however, and certain methods considered Christian by a part of the clergy are rated as not the highest means by others. Again, particular means are thought by one group of ministers to be "permissible" while a second group say they are wrong and should never be employed for financing the church.

Variety of Methods and Extent Used

The variety of methods and the extent to which they are used by churches in meeting budgets for local expenses and benevolence are given in Table IV. The means employed most universally are the freewill offering and the every member canvass or visitation, the former being reported by 77 per cent of the

TABLE IV
MEANS USED BY THE CHURCH IN RAISING MONEY TO MEET ITS BUDGET FOR
LOCAL EXPENSES AND BENEVOLENCE

	BANGOR (CONG.)	HARTFORD (CONG.)	YALE (CONG.)	GRIFFIN (LUTH.)	BURG (LUTH.)	MT. AIRY (LUTH.)	ADRIAN (PRESBY.)	BRACKLEY (EPIS.)	COLG. ROCH. (BAPT.)	DREW (METH.)	BIB. SEM. (INTER- DENOM.)	AVERAGE
Freewill Offering....	86	75	76	89	90	90	56	84	%	70	%	%
Every Mem. Canvass.	88	94	90	83	90	90	99	80	95	68	89	77.2
Dues.....	1	6	3	22	31	31	4	4	4	8	6	87.6
Pageants.....	14	4	9	22	10	10	6	28	10	16	9	8.9
Rent of Pews.....	12	6	7	..	..	3	4	8	..	1	..	12.8
Plays.....	37	25	29	44	44	23	22	44	22	36	20	4.1
Card Games.....	8	8	10	17	17	8	7	52	2	5	3	30.2
Dances.....	2	4	2	11	11	1	1	32	..	..	3	12.0
Lotteries.....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5.6
Raffles.....	..	..	..	6	6	..	..	..	1	1	..	1.1
Bazaars.....	16	9	21	17	16	16	14	4	16	19	3	1.6
Sales.....	54	40	36	28	22	22	26	60	29	30	23	18.3
Fairs.....	42	28	39	11	11	12	10	44	14	26	14	34.8
Dinners.....	64	49	46	50	29	29	43	56	43	47	31	24.0
Parties.....	14	9	15	17	13	13	11	44	8	11	14	45.8
Bowling Alleys.....	4	..	..	..	5	5	1	..	..	1	..	15.6
Pool Tables.....	1	..	..	..	..	3	..	..	..	..	..	1.1
												.4

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who filled out questionnaires, 86 per cent report that their churches use the freewill offering as a means of raising money to meet their budget for local expenses and benevolence, 88 p.c. use the every member canvass, 1 p.c. use dues, etc. Similarly read figures for each seminary.

churches and the latter by 87.6 p.c.¹ These two methods are considered ideal by the large majority of ministers and would probably be classed by them as Christian and permissible under all circumstances. They are thought to be businesslike and Scriptural. I Cor. 16:2 is given by some as the Biblical basis for church finance. The general view is that "the every member canvass is best, supplemented by freewill offering."

A few men, however, have objection to the every member canvass and believe the church should be run entirely on the freewill offering basis. One man says, "I have come to believe only in freewill offering. We have no canvass or solicitation for the church." A second comments, "I should like to omit 'passing the plate' on Sundays." A third pastor has reached the place where he does not "pass the plate." He states that his is a "faith" church and he receives no guaranteed salary. Duplex envelopes are used, one side being for expenses of the local church and the other side for the pastor, and the people can divide their gifts in any way they desire. A canvass is not made; no pledges are taken; and there is no special time in the service for the offering. Two boxes are at the doors and two in front of the pulpit in which the people leave their contributions, and they may do so either as they enter the church or as they go out. During the morning prayer the pastor thanks God for the provision for their church's needs. The principle behind the financing of this church is explained by the pastor as follows:

You do not ask a neighbor to help you sell a washing machine until he first has used such a machine and is satisfied with it. Thus we do not want any money from a person to help sell Christianity until that person is also sold on Christianity. There is no place in the Bible where Jesus tells us to get our system of raising money from the world. I do not think a church gains anything by passing a plate to a person for a nickel unless that person is a Christian. If a person

¹It should be stated that freewill offering is probably used by almost all, if not all, the churches. Some men checked the every member canvass only, apparently thinking that the primary means was wanted.

does put in something, he feels he has contributed and therefore can criticize the church. One puts in a nickel for the church, not because he believes in it. If he did believe in it, he would give a dollar. The most ideal thing is to ask only the believers in Jesus Christ to support the church. Let the Gospel be as free as the wind. Jesus said, "Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes."

The use of endowment funds is another method of financing the church which apparently is considered ethical and Christian by many clergymen. The officials of ten general church bodies, out of 79 reporting (12.6 per cent), state that endowments figure rather largely in the support of their ministers. A few others indicate that some of their congregations have funds invested.² In connection with this practice, 32 p.c. of the clergy consider it ethical for ministers or churches to invest in stocks and bonds, 14 p.c. believe it unethical, and 54 p.c. say it depends upon the circumstances of any particular case. Those who say the practice is ethical, however, consider "speculation," gambling, exploitation of labor, and "marginal buying" as wrong, but "good stocks and good bonds are good business." A few men state that investment in stocks is unethical but the purchase of bonds is satisfactory. Others believe the answer to this question depends upon "how and why" investments are made and whether or not "the company's industrial record and treatment of employees are investigated first."

The ethical judgment of the clergy was also asked upon the practice of investing in a corporation or firm without making an investigation to determine whether labor is exploited. This was rated as ethical by 6 p.c., unethical by 75 p.c., while 19 p.c. think it depends upon the circumstances of a particular case. A rather prevalent attitude is that "it is often impossible to investigate."

The various alumni groups differ considerably in the propor-

²From a questionnaire sent out by F. Darcy Bone of Yale Divinity School, in connection with his study on *Ethical Aspects of Compensation in the Ministry*, a doctoral dissertation submitted to the Yale Graduate School, 1937.

tion regarding it unethical to invest without investigating labor conditions. In order, the percentages run: Gettysburg (Lutheran) 94, Bangor (Congregational) 83, Mt. Airy (Lutheran) 83, Drew (Methodist) 80, Colgate-Rochester (Baptist) 78, Biblical Seminary (Inter-denominational) 77, Yale (Congregational) 71, Auburn (Presbyterian) 65, Hartford (Congregational) 60, Berkeley (Episcopal) 58.

Many of the other methods used in church finance are thought by ministers to be not wholly satisfactory but permissible if the church cannot meet expenses through other means, and are also considered justifiable because of certain values accompanying their use. Rental of pews, pageants, plays, bazaars, sales, fairs, dinners, and parties seem to be placed in this group by the majority. There is more opposition to cards and dances but some rate them as "permissible." Bowling alleys and pool tables are used by so few churches that not much opinion is registered either way.

Rental of pews was practiced rather extensively in the past in some sections of the country, but it is not looked on with favor today. Only 4 per cent check this method as now being used. There is some evidence that it was an unsuccessful method of church finance. One pastor, whose church still follows this custom, says it does not help them in a material way and the only reason they use the system is to protect their own worshippers. The services of this church are always crowded with visitors and if pew space were not held for members, they would not be accommodated. On the money raising side of the question, the pastor says, "Many who own pews do not make a contribution through the regular envelopes. It is a cheap way of getting religion. Pew rent brings in only about one-fourth of our finances."

Ministers also object to this means of raising money on the ground that it is not democratic.

The fact that Bangor, Hartford, Yale, and Berkeley graduates use pew rentals as a method of church finance more than men

of other seminaries seems only to indicate that the practice is slightly more prevalent in New England territory. However, it is used by only a small number of churches even in this locality.

Pageants are employed by 13 per cent of the churches as a means of bringing income to the church and plays are used by 30 p.c. The most general attitude seems to be against using these as means of support for the church, although their value for religious purposes and for development of persons is recognized. Two comments illustrate this view.

I am opposed to plays for money. If the purpose is to use dramatics for developing Christian character or raising the standard of drama, it is all right.

Pageants are taking a larger part in public worship. They are of great value and will be more so as time goes on. The same is true of plays but in a more limited extent. These should not be used for raising money but as a means of worship. Admission should never be charged.

On the other hand, quite a large group of the clergy favor these methods. They argue that persons are enabled to use their talent and ability for the good of the church; that some people can increase their gifts to the church in this way; and that the social life accompanying these functions is beneficial to the church.

Bazaars, sales, fairs, dinners, and parties are considered somewhat unsatisfactory as means for church support, but sometimes permissible because of values that accompany their use. Dinners are conducted by 46 per cent of the churches, sales by 35 p.c., fairs by 24 p.c., bazaars by 18 p.c., and parties by 15.6 p.c. Episcopal churches seem to have a stronger tendency to use these methods than other churches.

The clergy whose churches conduct dinners, bazaars, etc. tend to justify their use upon the ground that some people are given an opportunity to work for the church who otherwise would not be able to do so.

Everybody ought to have an opportunity to show his loyalty to the church through his work. God calls people into His vineyard, not just to hear sermons, but to work. We have from one to two hundred women who make things and their love for the church is in this work. I wouldn't rob them of that opportunity. We have our committees for visiting the sick, etc., but it is impossible to keep all the women busy in that way and in visiting new members. And then, too, some women can't do these things and are not fitted for them.

Some people can help the church by these unscriptural means, when they might not be able to do so by giving. The poor can show their willingness by their labor.³

Development of social life and a spirit of co-operation are also seen as values which make these means of church support permissible. "When people are engaged in these tasks they are working for the church. They get together in a common task socially. They are trained to work together and it is good for them and for the church."

Furthermore, dinners are justified on the ground that it is sometimes impossible to sponsor successfully a social program unless there is the added attraction of the "kitchen" and the opportunity to help the church in a financial way. "It is difficult in many localities to find a social substitute for the 'kitchen fellowship' many people seem to enjoy. A purely social program falls flat very often, while kitchen activities, plus the thrill of making money, have strong allure."

On the other hand, many ministers object to the use of the so-called "permissible" means of church support on a number of counts. In the first place, they see the use of fairs, dinners, etc. as a waste of time and effort, "an expensive and an exhausting way of money making."

³The ethical implications of this rather common view are apparently not sensed—the poor do the work and the rich give their money. As a matter of actual practice, it by no means works out that way, although the tendency toward a class distinction is clear.

These affairs are likewise condemned on the ground that "the church as a non-profit making, non-taxable institution ought not to enter into competition with local merchants and business men in its efforts to raise money." One has only to visit a prosperous church fair to realize the inroads made upon legitimate business by these sales of goods.

A general feeling of the ministers is that these various money raising methods are lowering the dignity of the church and should not be used. A pastor illustrates this attitude when he says, "Church begging is not superior to other forms of begging."

These critics are willing to admit that there might be justification for such means of church support "if the congregation were giving to the limit of its capacity and still did not meet expenses." However, they are agreed that it would be hard to establish the point at which a congregation has reached its maximum effort in this direction.

Card games and dances are not employed very largely as a means of church support, the former being practiced by 12 per cent of the churches and the latter by 5.6 p.c. The Episcopal churches (Berkeley), however, are an exception in this matter, 52 p.c. using card games and 32 p.c. conducting dances for this purpose. The majority of ministers seem to have a rather strong antagonism toward these as methods of finance while some object to them on other grounds. One pastor says, "I cringe at card games and dances in the name of the church, let alone for the purpose of raising money for it. But some of them do it around here." A second states that "card games cheapen and vulgarize the church."

Others have no particular opposition to cards and dancing, as such, but they do not believe any gain comes to the church from using these methods.

A third group is opposed to card games, but inasmuch as people cannot be prevented from using cards, this group feels the church might as well realize something financially. The following state-

ment is typical: "I believe cards for prizes are a form of gambling, but if people will play cards anyway, I see no harm in asking them to pay for the right to play, if the money is given to the church."

A few pastors have little or no opposition to the practice of raising money through card parties and dancing and some of these men are quite critical of those who oppose the practice. For example:

I am now a little more liberal and sane. I think dances and cards are wholesome diversions and if a few shekels can be realized by a missionary society or ladies' aid, why not? Let not the church persist in its gnat and camel procedure. It has canonized industrial brigands because they gave of their loot to the church. Yet the same church frowns upon bridge playing. I would not accept dishonest money to run my church.

Bowling alleys and pool tables are used very little for supporting the financial program of the church. As already noted, so few churches have this equipment that not many men have been confronted with the problem.

The two practices considered unchristian by almost all ministers are lotteries and raffles. Only 1.6 per cent of the churches use raffles for money raising purposes and only one church uses lotteries. We quote typical statements showing the viewpoints upon this matter, without comment on their ethical significance, or on the presence of similar factors in other enterprises.

Lotteries, games of chance, etc., are taboo under all circumstances. People have a right to criticize the church on this practice.

Lotteries, raffles, and games of chance are gambling. True faith is a great gamble—one is playing for big stakes. But gambling is faith gone wrong.

Raffling is unchristian because it is against the law of the state.

Financing Church Organizations

Up to this point we have been discussing the practice of raising money for church purposes only. Organizations within the church also use various methods of securing income, and for purposes other than the church budget. For example, 57 per cent of the ministers report that organizations use plays for financing their projects while only 30 p.c. state that their churches secure budgetary support in this manner. Again, 67.5 p.c. of the clergy say dinners are given by organizations for raising money, whereas only 46 p.c. indicate that church budgets receive aid in this way. Pageants, card games, and dances are used approximately twice as much for organizational purposes as for church support.

Why this difference in practice? In the interviews ministers expressed a general opposition toward employing any methods other than freewill offering and the every member canvass for meeting the church budget. Yet these same men did not seem so greatly concerned about methods used by organizations in raising money for other purposes. One receives the impression that the organizational work is not on the same spiritual level. Perhaps a better explanation of this diversity in practice is that the pastor usually exerts considerable influence on the methods of financing the regular church budget, but seems not always to have control of the organizations.

Stewardship

The principal objection raised to all methods of church finance other than freewill offering and the every member canvass, whether for the church budget or organizational projects, is well expressed by one pastor as follows:

Most of the above means (the means that have just been discussed) of raising money should be condemned. The reason is not that they always involve an out-and-out element of chance, such as lotteries, but the more fundamental fact that they do not constitute an expression of a Christian attitude and they do not contribute to enrichment of personality.

The motive of giving is external and quite devoid of the idea of stewardship, which is, after all, the only adequate and permanent motivation for producing that inner growth of personality.

Another pastor, who also holds this view, has been successful in eliminating all the money-making aspects of these projects. Yet he states that his people still have sufficient opportunity to give their services for the church and most of the social values by which ministers tend to justify these practices for money raising are retained. He describes the practice:

Today we are having the annual meeting of the congregation and the annual parish dinner. The charge is for the cost of the food only. We have plays staged by our own groups but no admission is charged. They are given for the entertainment of other groups and for the development of the players themselves. Pageants are held in the church without charge. Friday night we are having a party including a dance and we charge nothing. We are attempting to develop the idea of a parish family group and we prefer to have every one make a contribution to the entire work of the church.

Influence of Tradition and Social and Economic Conditions

When the clergy are confronted with an "ideal" practice as just described, many of them reveal immediately the strong pressures they meet in the form of local tradition. It at once becomes clear that they are either afraid or unable to make their views prevail in the face of previous practice which has become custom. "In practice I have found it wise to accept the community standards," says one pastor. Another states, "My view is that commercial methods of money raising hurt the church's influence, but I have never yet had a church where I could wisely insist on making my view control the church's practice."

Along with traditions in the community which tend to dominate practice, the changing social and economic conditions are a second influence bearing upon the problem. The argument is advanced that depression times force one to compromise and to

use, as an emergency accommodation, means of church support which are not ideal.

Summary

Although almost all of the churches use both the every member canvass and freewill offering in meeting their budget, yet probably no more than half support the main work of the church by these "ideal" methods alone. When the work of church organizations is included in the picture, the vast majority are seen to resort to methods of money raising regarded as less than "ideal."

Ministers tend to justify semicommercial methods on the ground that the poor are enabled to contribute to the church; that this permits people to give service in addition to money; that the income of the church is increased and the aid of others in the community is enlisted; that various talents and abilities are utilized and persons are developed; and that there is a social value and spirit of co-operation growing out of these functions which are beneficial both to the congregation and to the people.

Objections, however, are raised to such means of church finance. According to the clergy they are a loss in terms of time, energy, and money; they are unfair to legitimate business; the dignity of the church is lowered and influence lessened; persons do not learn stewardship of giving; and practically all the concomitant values of those methods can be retained without their use.

Although ministers testify to the value of these methods of church finance, their testimony arouses doubt when one notes that they probably would prefer not to use them but that local traditions and social pressures tend to dominate practice.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP STANDARDS

We turn now to ethical problems centering in the establishment and maintenance of standards of church membership. What specific obligations do ministers place upon persons uniting with the

church? What methods of discipline are used by the clergy and what offences call for correction?

Specific Obligations Imposed upon Persons Uniting with the Church

To determine the duties imposed upon incoming members, eleven statements were listed on the questionnaire as possible obligations. Ministers were asked to check any or all that are assumed by persons uniting with the church.

Four responsibilities are placed upon incoming members by 90 per cent of the clergy: Attendance at worship services regularly is required by 93 p.c.; support of the church financially by 93 p.c.; support of the church through personal service by 92 p.c.; and living a clean life in personal morals by 90 p.c. In regard to attending worship services regularly, however, "allowance" is sometimes made "for many worthy pursuits which may share the time and care of a true church member."

Four other obligations are placed upon members by more than 60 per cent. To be ethical in conduct of business or in the work in which the member is engaged, whether he be employer or employee, is required by 70.6 p.c.; to be active in works of charity by 68 p.c.; to take part actively in organizations of the church by 66 p.c.; and to share in movements for the upbuilding of the community by 63 p.c. It is occasionally stated by persons within this group that participation in organizations of the church is not required "of all persons."

Only slightly more than half (53.6 per cent) insist upon members upholding creeds or beliefs and practices of the church. Some ministers qualify even this obligation. One pastor in the Presbyterian Church, U. S. A., indicates that creeds are insisted on "only for officers." Some erase the word "creed" and leave only the phrase "beliefs and practices of the church." Another insists upon creeds "only in a general non-legalistic way, leaving room for individual differences." A fourth states that "creeds must not

be too much formulated and detailed. Private thought, judgment, and conscience are stressed." However, more Lutherans (Gettysburg 83 p.c. and Mt. Airy 88 p.c.) and Episcopalians (Berkeley 76 p.c.) than ministers in other church bodies (average 41 p.c.) make this requirement of persons uniting with their churches.

The obligation of sharing in movements and organizations for the uplifting of the underprivileged groups in society is placed upon members by 53 per cent of the clergy, and 52 p.c. want members to be different in conduct of private affairs and in morals from people who are not members of a church. Such comments as these, however, qualify this obligation: "Aim high but avoid self-righteousness. Don't parade differences"; "I want this conduct to be right and I make no comparison with non-members"; "The emphasis of mere difference doesn't interest me."

At least half of the clergy ask persons uniting with their church to assume all the obligations listed in the last four paragraphs. Many of the men who check the list, however, do not seem to make these obligations specific. Responses indicate that where the general church body has a regular form of admission, it is ordinarily used. In other cases where ministers draw up their own covenants for use in receiving members, as seems to be the practice of many Congregational and Baptist pastors, such duties are often not explicitly stated. Statements on this point follow: "We ask only the stock questions of the book of forms for such cases"; "These are understood rather than distinctly stated. When we revise our admission form, I hope to make them more distinct"; "We do not ask any of the above explicitly. We tell them to remember the covenant to support 'the worship, work, and charities' of the church and to lead a 'Christian life.'"

It is true that some church bodies have the practice of confirmation, and in such cases periods of instruction precede membership. Opportunity is offered in these classes for emphasizing the duties of church members. Yet the Episcopalians and Lutherans,

who perhaps follow the practice of confirmation most generally, do not check these obligations more than other church groups, with the exception of the one on creeds and beliefs or practices of the church. Some men of the other groups, such as Baptists and Congregationalists, are also giving periods of instruction prior to admission to church membership. This, however, is not practiced by all pastors and even where church membership classes are held, the receiving of instruction is not always made compulsory upon prospective church members. In any case, according to the testimony of ministers in the interviews, classes are primarily for young people, and adults seldom attend. They state that "it is difficult to get adults to go into these classes."

It probably can be concluded, then, that many of the clergy do not interpret the obligations of membership in specific terms to persons uniting with the church. Is the realization of specific obligations, then, to be assumed, or is the matter of responsibilities of members of no great importance?

Ministers tend to justify their practice on the ground that it is not necessary to enter into detail in the matter of responsibilities. The only requirement needed is an emphasis on Christian living or an acceptance of Jesus Christ and these other duties will necessarily follow. "The promise to accept Jesus Christ has many implications not specified and yet certainly included above." "Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ includes all these and more." "Complete Christian living is the obligation of church membership." "All this is assumed in one's pledge to the church." Perhaps the problem here is whether a general pledge does, as a matter of fact, insure ethical conduct in particular situations.

Some men are dissatisfied with the present state of church membership and feel that standards should be raised.

I believe the church should be stricter in its membership requirements. True, we cannot read the hearts, but I feel the present-day laxity on the part of members is due to the laxity in church standards.

I would welcome a more generally recognized instruction period for adults, and a probationary period before reception into membership by the right hand of fellowship. People easily slip away from church because they get in too easily.

I believe we should make more of induction of members into church and emphasize responsibilities. Church membership is too easy.

On the other hand, a few clergymen have about reached the conclusion that there should be no church membership whatsoever and that there is nothing distinctive about the obligations or life of people in the church. The views are indicated in the statements that follow:

I now feel that church membership has no distinctive obligations. The lines of distinction are broken down. The church should be more democratic. Those are truly members who show interest. We should not have church membership.

Church membership lists are rather meaningless. I have been wondering if we would not have done better to have kept our "Ecclesiastical Societies" and to have abolished our "Churches." The distinction between the church member and non-church member is in a vast number of cases a distinction without a difference.

The conclusion from this discussion seems to be that many of the clergy not only fail to interpret the obligations of church membership in specific terms, but they also tend to justify the practice on the grounds that it is not necessary to do so and that specific duties are assumed when one agrees to accept and follow Christ. Some have reached the point where they would like to see church membership abolished altogether, while others prefer to see the standards raised.

Extent to Which Various Methods of Discipline Are Used

A problem closely related to the setting of standards is that of their maintenance. The clergy were therefore given an opportu-

nity to indicate their methods of procedure in case members fail to fulfill their responsibilities. The results show that if a member does not live up to the obligations which he has assumed, 68.6 per cent of the ministers discuss the matter with him in private and point out his error. The comments accompanying these replies, however, such as, "In a few cases" and "Sometimes," seem to suggest that this group of men do not have a general practice of speaking in private to delinquent members.

A small group (13 per cent) state that if the person continues in his failure to live up to his obligations, he is brought before the church board. "If the case is serious," is the comment of one who checks this practice. Another says, "In case of immorality."

A few men (9.5 per cent) indicate that if after bringing the person before the church board there is no change, the case is referred to the congregation, when the person may be dropped from membership if he continues in his failure.

These three procedures, namely, talking with the person in private, bringing him before the church board, and referring the case to the congregation to consider dropping him from membership, are quite similar to the prescription in Mt. 18:15-17, which is the scriptural foundation upon which most church bodies have built their formulae for discipline.

The use of the pulpit is another technique employed for urging fulfilment of responsibilities on the part of members. Almost three-fourths of the clergy (73 per cent) speak from the pulpit, in a general way, of failures to live up to obligations. Less than half that number (30 p.c.) speak from the pulpit of specific failures to live up to church membership requirements, but no names are mentioned. Some men, however, object to the use of the pulpit for disciplinary purposes on the ground that the minister ought to have the courage to talk directly with the person involved. One comment sufficiently illustrates this attitude.

I do not hide behind the pulpit to say things to members who are failing to live up to their obligations. If we haven't

the courage to deal with individuals face to face, then we should keep quiet until we get the courage to do so.

It is stated by 6 per cent that if a member does not live up to the standards of the church they do nothing about it. One of this group adds, "I do not say I am satisfied with this."

The fact that very few ministers bring persons before either the church board or congregation seems to suggest that formal church discipline has practically disappeared. When one notices the offences which cause discipline to be applied, this conclusion is even more firmly grounded.

Offences Leading to Discipline

Inactivity on the part of a member is the most general offence leading to action by the minister and the church. The method of correction, in such case, usually consists of a conference of either the minister or a member of the church board with the lax person in the attempt to persuade him to assume active relations. If this consultation proves unsuccessful, the case is referred to the church board or membership committee and the person may be placed on the inactive list. Then after two or three years, if no change in status develops, he may be removed from the roll entirely. Sometimes no attempt is made in a personal way to restore these persons to active membership, but notification is sent them when they are placed upon the inactive list:

If the people do not attend or do not contribute they are put on an inactive list. They are retained on that for a certain length of time and then dropped altogether. I insist that if any one is taken off the roll the minutes should indicate it. If he wants to come back then the records show his standing. We usually send the pastor and a couple of deacons to see the man. Then he comes before the Board and the Board makes the recommendation to the congregation. This is in accordance with the principle in Matthew.

Only a very few cases were mentioned in which persons have

been formally disciplined on grounds of immorality. Several reasons are offered to explain why correction has not been attempted very largely at this point. In the first place, many do not look with favor upon the practice and feel there are better ways of accomplishing one's purpose. Statements of their position follow:

I have come to believe that the church should be very lenient in its dealing with faulty members. Only where a member by his extreme and disgraceful conduct was casting serious reflection upon his church would I recommend bringing his case before the church meeting for action leading to dismissal. The by-laws of my church provide for such action.

I don't believe in church discipline. I think the church is for people who are not perfect but who want to be. I will not put people out of the church if it is at all possible to keep them. The minister personally and officers of the session may well work with people but the church should not put them out. The church hasn't the authoritative position it used to have and I am not sure it ought to have it.

In the second place, some of the clergy apparently are afraid to discipline members. In regard to bringing an offender before the church board, one man says, "Just try this once." Another states that "discipline is next to impossible." Perhaps the same element of fear is present in the following comment: "Ministers who have done this have found the cabinet siding with the offending members."

The officials of the larger church body are also criticized on the ground that they do not support a pastor when he attempts to exercise restraint. One states that "the problem lies with the general administration, who very seldom, if ever, back a minister when he feels that a member of his church is in need of discipline." Another says, "Higher-ups are more concerned about enlarging church membership than in holding members to obligations." A third makes this comment:

Church discipline is hard to enforce. We have our by-laws

and constitutions but to try to enforce them, or have the church council do so, is a difficult thing to do. If synod or conference presidents would back up the pastor in such cases, it would be easier to enforce the rule. As it now is, I think most members feel they can do as they please.

A fourth influence which prevents men from practicing church discipline on the ground of personal immorality is the study of psychology and mental hygiene. These people are "not sinning but are sick" is a rather typical attitude today. Another says, "An understanding of psychopathic cases has greatly increased my attempts to work out effective dealing with such by way of more frequent interviews."

Conferences with the clergy revealed no cases of discipline on grounds of social morality. A man can be unethical in the conduct of his business relations and the church will do nothing about it. A person belonging to the church can run a sweat shop and probably not be touched by that church, according to the testimony of the clergy. They give as a reason for this that the community has not developed a standard by which one can judge a person in his economic and social life, although some feel such a standard is now developing. We quote from men on this point.

The community has standards in regard to sexual relations and in regard to theft. This is not true in certain commercial and public relations. We are gradually approaching the time, I hope, when conscience on those matters is being rendered more sensitive. Men have been caught in a system and such men have not been regarded as unethical. We are now coming to a position where that is not true. We are coming to a higher standard in public relations. We are moving from a rule of individualism in manufacturing to a social control of manufacturing. The minister cannot do so much with individual cases of the lack of economic ethics until he gets public opinion to support him.

Church discipline is applied on personal morals more than on social morals. Society has not worked out a standard of

judgment on social morals. I should hesitate to apply church discipline in any kind of case. It is better to keep the person in the church.

The church has failed to discipline people on economic failure for three reasons. First, the church has been ignorant concerning economic issues; second, there have been connections in the church that would be feared and because of them it has been hesitant; and third, the church has not known what method to use in correcting those evils. The man who is immoral in business should not be standing at the head of the Sunday school, but there is a fear of the rich man.

Summary

In summarizing our discussion of the second set of ethical problems in the area of church relations, we note that the four duties most frequently required of members are those of attending worship services regularly, supporting the church financially, supporting the church through personal work, and living a clean moral life, while among the obligations most seldom exacted are those of sharing in movements for the upbuilding of the community and participating in movements and organizations for uplifting the underprivileged groups in society. This seems to show that the clergy give more emphasis in their standards to maintenance of the church as an institution than they do to reconstruction of the social order.

A superficial examination of church membership requirements makes it appear that at least half the clergy require all eleven obligations to be assumed by incoming members, and that the four primary duties are placed upon members by about 90 per cent of the ministers. However, the fact that the forms of the denomination for reception of members are ordinarily used, that, where covenants are drawn up by the local church, duties are often stated only in general terms, and that adults are not usually given instruction prior to membership, seems to indicate that many clergymen do not interpret church-membership responsi-

bilities in specific terms. The general tendency also is to justify this failure to make obligations specific on the ground that it is unnecessary and that duties are assumed when one agrees to accept and follow Christ.

It is apparent that creeds are assuming a less important place in the mind of the ministerial profession when we note that only 53.6 per cent report that church members are obligated to uphold certain creeds or beliefs and practices of the church, while at the same time eight other duties are required by a larger number of ministers. The Lutheran and Episcopal clergy, however, give more emphasis to creeds than other groups.

Not only is there a failure to place specific obligations upon church members, but it seems also that formal church discipline has practically disappeared. This conclusion is borne out in the discussion of offences which lead to discipline, where one notes that very few ministers discipline cases of personal immorality, that apparently none correct persons on social-civic evils, and that about the only action taken by the church board is to retire delinquents to an inactive membership list.

Although some of the clergy apparently fail to practice discipline out of fear and because of the fact that church boards and higher church officials do not support them, others do not engage in such action because they no longer believe in it. The study of psychology and mental hygiene has been an influence in this direction and it has led to a greater emphasis on the personal conference. However, inasmuch as only 68 per cent state that they speak with members in private and some of this group only "in a few cases," the conclusion seems to follow that adequate treatment of these persons is not yet universal.

PROBLEMS OF INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

So far, the discussion has focused on those problems of leadership which involve the ministers in the traditions of local church practice. Two other problems bearing upon his individual freedom

are pertinent at this point. The one relates to the minister's obligation to his denomination, and the other to local limitations on freedom of the pulpit.

With regard to the first of these two problems, the issue seems to lie at the point of enforced conformity in beliefs. What course should the minister adopt if he no longer agrees with certain principles or dogmas of his church? Should he sever his relationship or is it his higher duty to remain within the denomination? The attitudes of the clergy upon this point are shown in Table V. A minority group (20 per cent) say it is ethical for a minister to remain in his denomination under such circumstances. Their view is that he should attempt to "reform" the church. They sometimes qualify their judgment, however, by saying it is ethical if there are not "too many disagreements."

A slightly larger group (31 per cent) consider it unethical for a minister to remain in his church when he is not in agreement with it. The general attitude of these men is that the clergyman has agreed to abide by the accepted principles of a church body and if he is no longer in harmony with those requirements he has no right to be a representative of that group. Statements illustrating their view follow:

While a minister is in a church he should have regard for its tenets. After all a church is a big family group and he should not insist upon individuality to the extent that it will cause trouble in the group. The church cannot be infallible, but he chose to work in it and should abide by its rules.

It is most unethical for a minister to stay in a church when he is out of accord with its principles. If another church suits his attitude better, he should go into it.

The largest number of ministers (49 per cent) say the matter of remaining within a denomination when one does not agree with some of its principles depends upon the circumstances of a particular case. This group holds that one should not leave his church unless "the points of disagreement are important ones."

The decision would also depend upon whether it is a "free church or closed church. One cannot be bound to approve everything about one's organization unless its fundamental principle is obedience to authority. A Congregationalist is differently placed from a Romanist."

TABLE V

JUDGMENT OF MINISTERS ON THE PRACTICE OF
CLERGY WHO REMAIN IN THEIR DENOMINATION
EVEN THOUGH THEY DO NOT AGREE WITH CERTAIN
OF ITS PRINCIPLES OR DOGMAS

	ETHICAL	UNETHICAL	DEPENDS
	%	%	%
Bangor (Cong.).....	22	22	57
Hartford (Cong.).....	26	16	59
Yale (Cong.).....	27	14	59
Gettysburg (Luth.).....	22	39	39
Mt. Airy (Luth.).....	1	68	31
Auburn (Presby.).....	28	17	55
Berkeley (Epis.).....	27	35	38
Colg.-Roch. (Bapt.).....	20	25	55
Drew (Meth.).....	19	24	57
Bib. Sem. (Inter-denom.).....	8	47	45
Average.....	20.0	30.7	49.3

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who check their judgment on the practice of clergy who remain in their denomination even though they do not agree with certain of its principles or dogmas, 22 per cent consider it ethical, 22 p.c. consider it unethical, and 57 p.c. say it depends upon the circumstances of any particular case. Similarly, read figures for each seminary.

But what is a sufficiently important point of disagreement to warrant severing one's relationship? Some say that a fundamental doctrine of the church should be involved. A Presbyterian pastor says, "If a man is in an Evangelical church and denies the deity of Christ he ought to get out." On the other hand, 95 per cent of the ministers consider it unethical for a man to smoke after being

admitted to ordination in a church upon his agreement not to use tobacco.⁴

Is it wrong to hold mental reservations when going into a church? There are responses on both sides of the question. One pastor says, "When I made the Confession of Faith to go into the Presbyterian Church, I did so with reservations." He goes on to say, "There must be such mental reservation in anything we do if we would be consistent at all." (!) On the other side of the question is the statement of a Methodist, who says, "Some who sign the smoking clause do it with reservations which, I think, is unethical. I would rather have a man say he wouldn't sign it. Some have said they would not sign that clause and yet they have gotten into the church."

There seem to be no generally accepted criteria for determining when a disagreement is sufficiently important to warrant severing one's relation with his church.

The second issue involving individual freedom concerns the respective rights of the minister and the congregation regarding the use of the pulpit. The majority of ministers feel they should be granted freedom to express themselves in the pulpit on any question. This fact has already been pointed out in Chapter II. It was noted that about three-fourths of the clergy preach upon political questions and nine-tenths upon social and economic problems when a moral issue is involved.⁵ In the interviews this attitude was confirmed.

The clergy, however, recognize certain limitations upon the pulpit. Only 10.5 per cent speak for particular candidates, which seems to suggest that the other 90 p.c. feel either that they do not wish to, or that their rights do not extend that far, or that the congregation will not permit freedom to this extent. Ministers also

⁴Among the Methodist clergy, in whose church that agreement is usually required, only 87 per cent say it is unethical. Perhaps the majority of the men, however, would not advise the Methodists who smoke to leave their church.

⁵The method of deciding when a moral issue is involved was not clear, so that the actual preaching on social issues turned out to be relatively inoffensive.

object to the use of the pulpit "for riding a hobby" or speaking so many times upon one subject that the people have become tired of it. One pastor suggests that it is not "so much a matter of freedom as good taste." He goes on to say that he concentrates "on special occasions, such as Labor Day and Armistice Day 'to say his whole' mind on these things, rather than rant on them all the time."

Apparently ministers do not express their theological doubts in the pulpit, which is somewhat of a self-imposed limitation. On the questionnaire returns 45 per cent said that to preach doubts would be unethical, while 42 p.c. thought it depended upon the circumstances of any particular case, and only 13 p.c. considered the practice ethical. Even those who stated that the practice is ethical also thought it probably would be "unwise." That the minister should "preach convictions" is the majority opinion.

The conclusion follows that while practically all the clergy demand the right to express their views in the pulpit upon any issue, yet they also recognize the rights of the parishioners, and seem to be careful to avoid controversy. It is considered wrong to dwell upon any one subject continuously and the majority state that convictions should be preached rather than doubts.

FACTS AND ISSUES

Let us bring together a few of the more important circumstances faced by the minister as he endeavors to provide ethical leadership for his congregation. He has no clear mandate, either for his action or his conscience, for even when he is in no doubt as to what is right, he is often unable to make his judgment, or his ethical authority, prevail in any given case. His congregation, with its tradition, is supreme.

The particular points of frequent compromise with principle with which this chapter has been concerned center around finances, membership standards, denominational loyalties, and freedom of the pulpit. It has been shown that the great majority

of pastors, somewhat reluctantly, report the use of methods of raising money which are, to say the least, less than ideal. Some procedures are frankly acknowledged as emergency measures. But it is of some interest to note the almost universal condemnation of raffles and lotteries by these Protestant ministers. A further study of what may be properly classified under these heads might be illuminating.

A few questions are raised by ministers which open up certain aspects of professional ethics. What is the proper relation of the church to the legitimate business of the community? Is it fair to conduct sales, or even provide meals for profit, if it takes business away from others? Few complain of this, and it does offer a chance for members to give service as well as, or instead of, money to the church. But is this the last word? Are the skirts of the church as clean as might be expected of an institution that in recent years is prone to find fault with the methods of business? And how about investments? Endowments are not very common, but a considerable number of churches have invested funds of some sort. A third of the pastors regard it as ethical to invest in stocks and bonds, and about half feel that it is if circumstances justify it. A challenge to the ministry and the church is clearly presented by the fact that three-fourths of the ministers regarded it to be unethical to invest in a corporation without first making an investigation to find out whether or not labor is being exploited by this corporation.

A recurring dilemma for the minister which confronts him again at this point of finance is the relation of his own security to the methods used by his church to raise money. He and his family depend upon the outcome of any method used. This puts him in a peculiarly difficult position.

The same issue arises when problems of discipline are faced. Some ministers, at least, are aware of the danger both to their church budget and to their own position of attempting enforcement of moral standards, or even a clear, specific enunciation of

charges against violators, either as a class, or as individual persons.

Membership requirements are usually so broad as to make general discussion of laxity both feasible and proper. But it is not apparent to what extent such laxity may be due to lack of information as to detailed duties. Some claim that no such information is needed: Loyalty to Christ or to the church is a sufficiently unambiguous duty. And others claim that the church has no business to interfere with private interpretations of what such loyalty means. Indeed some would go so far as to dispense with membership altogether, and rely on educational forces and on the effect of mutual efforts of sincere people to secure any moral values the church may be expected to foster.

A point repeatedly mentioned is the difference between infractions of moral codes in the field of so-called private morals and in the field of social-civic morality. The change in attitude toward the minister as expressing a moral authority is very clear. What he can do depends not on his office or reputation but upon the state of public opinion in his church. He can do or say no more than his congregation, or its influential members, permit.

Many ministers are eagerly accepting a way out of this dilemma, so far as private defections of character are concerned, by disclaiming the pertinence of moral judgment and turning to medical concepts and methods. Bad people are sick. They need help, not condemnation. The measure of the validity of this view and of the sincerity with which it is held should be the extent to which puzzled ministers are training themselves for this type of service.

The same logic leads to the conception of the sick society and to the need of strenuous efforts to make it well, if condemnation of the sins of society is no longer in order. Here again, some specific efforts in this direction would seem to be called for if the ministry is to retain for the church its ethical function in society.

Chapter V

PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS

One of the chief articles of professional codes concerns the definition of proper relations with other members of the profession. Although ostensibly for the protection of the public, these principles of professional conduct work out to protect the members of the profession in the legitimate pursuit of their business. Each profession constitutes a more or less closed group from which the public is excluded as far as possible. But within the group, competition must be regulated so that the less ethically minded members will not trespass on territory staked out by others.

The minister is in a similar relationship to his co-ministers. That he depends on a stipulated salary rather than fees does not constitute an essential difference, as his salary is forthcoming only when his church is a success. He is therefore in actual or potential competition with other ministers. This need for a stable or an increasing constituency may often create an issue between the rights of the church or the minister on the one hand and the general public on the other. That is, if the public may be regarded as needing religion in the same sense as it needs medical care.

This chapter will point out conflicts of interest among pastors, and only incidentally raise questions of the jeopardy to the cause of religion which may result from unprofessional behavior. These conflicts range around three centers: the transfer of members, the giving of service to members of other churches, the relations of predecessor and successor.

TRANSFER OF CHURCH MEMBERS

As might be expected, this problem of transferring memberships from one church to another is not a simple matter of uniform ethical practice. The rights and wrongs are complicated by a

number of sociological factors in the relations of city and suburban areas, and of urban and rural areas. Furthermore, within the same city, parishes differ widely in the nature of the membership and its geographical distribution. It is not surprising, therefore, that no clear cut policy regarding the receiving of members from other churches has been worked out which can be regarded as ethically justifiable in all cases. What some ministers regard as their rights may, from some more inclusive view of the wise conduct of religious institutions, be not rights at all. But until adequate policies of church extension and of relations among churches have been worked out on the basis of objective sociological facts, jealousies, resentments, and irresponsible conduct will characterize a considerable proportion of the ministry. This in itself is bad for the church and detracts from its possible usefulness to the community.

In working out the facts as to how ministers approach potential members, only those cases were considered in which a member of a church moves into the vicinity of a church at some distance, but within the "metropolitan" area. The existing practices may be divided into three types. In the first type, the minister takes the initiative in trying to persuade the person to leave the distant church and unite with the group near by. In the second practice, the pastor does not wish to urge a member of another congregation to leave that body and come to the church near by, unless the member first takes the initiative by attending the services. If the member takes this first step, the minister then feels justified in asking him to unite. In the third type of practice, the pastor refuses to assume any responsibility whatsoever in the matter, and will not accept a member from another church in the same city, unless the person makes a request to become affiliated.

Just why ministers differ in these three ways is by no means clear. No distinctions were found among the various denominations nor did the city, suburban, and rural ministers differ materially in the proportions adhering to one practice or another.

Type 1. The Pastor Takes the Initiative

Approximately one-third of all the ministers say that when a person or a family moves into their vicinity they go to the homes of these people and invite them to attend their church and unite with it. This is the general trend of this type, but of course these same men sometimes act in other ways.

Let us note the arguments that are presented for and against this practice.

These three suburbanites cite the expense of transportation, the need for parents to be with their children, and community responsibility as reasons which justify their getting members of downtown churches to join the suburban churches, if they can persuade them to do so.

I have a friend in the heart of . . . who tells me it costs many of his men more than a dollar to bring their families down to church and to take them back on the streetcars. That is the reason people join the suburban church in some cities. They feel there is no use in giving a dollar to the street-car company.

I always throw out an invitation in the pulpit to prospective church members. Usually when I visit the home it is because children are in the Sunday school. When children are in the Sunday school, you have a perfect right to go after the parents.

I think people have a community responsibility. They send their children here. Why should they go downtown? It is just as unethical one way as the other.

Others believe in "stealing sheep" on the ground that geographical membership promotes regularity and avoids duplication. For example:

Geographical church membership is the only hope of Protestantism. We must cut down overlapping and duplication of denominations and put on a good program that will challenge people. Otherwise we can't have a geograph-

ical set-up. It is not possible very well under the present system.

I am a great believer in geographical church membership. I do not believe in this remote membership business. Most of these people who live out here and belong to . . . and . . . almost never go. If I could get them they would have less excuse for staying away from church. I am asking them but am meeting with rather indifferent success. I get crocodile tears and sweet sentiment. They say their grandmother belonged to that church and they could not think of leaving.

Some of the ministers in downtown parishes agree entirely with their suburban brethren on this point, as witness this comment:

I would not criticize a community church pastor who takes my members living in his community. I tell him to do it. From the point of view of the family relationship, there is reason for people to go with their children to the community churches. I have advised parents to go to churches nearest them. We have plenty members here anyway. (The church has 2000 members.)

On the other hand, ministers in downtown churches sometimes resent this interference with their members who have moved out into the suburban communities. They feel there is no such thing as geographical church membership and that people should be allowed to decide for themselves the matter of their membership. These men say the community minister is not responsible for members of other churches living in his community and he should not try to entice such persons away from their congregations. Here is a typical comment:

People have proselyted from us. We are a downtown church. When people move into the suburbs, the suburban men go after them. I do not think they are justified in doing this. We have to draw from all over the city. We haven't a half dozen members in the territory allotted to us by the parish plan of the Council of Churches. The Council

has divided the city and has made each church responsible for a certain section. In our section we have exactly four members. The suburban men are not obligated to care for the members of our church, because our people are everywhere. We are responsible for them.'

Many ministers of downtown churches see both sides of the question. They recognize a certain claim which the suburban man seems to have in going after all people in his community. But they see, too, that the center church has a function to perform and that the community parish alone does not meet the needs of the whole city. They acknowledge the necessity of ministering to the poorer classes usually surrounding the center of the city, but they know also that, unless they receive the support of some people in outlying districts, they will be unable to fulfil their obligation to those near by. "If the large center church tells its members to unite with a community congregation, it will soon go out of business."

This problem of the relationship between the community and downtown congregations is complicated by the denominational problem. Each denomination apparently has tried to establish large church organizations at the center of cities, and the same competitive spirit has gone on in the suburban districts, so that the churches in both sections have had a struggle to maintain themselves. One minister states that in his city of 100,000 inhabitants there are six churches—two Episcopal, two Congregational, one Baptist, and one Methodist—all trying to maintain themselves as downtown congregations. Another, in speaking of the conditions in his suburban community, says:

We have four churches in this community that are on missionary money. One started with fourteen people. The denomination put in between \$20,000 and \$40,000 and gave them a pastor. Another church has done likewise. The Episcopal congregation has had a building erected for them at a cost of \$40,000. It has one hundred members. We have six hundred members and sweat blood to keep going. One man is sent down here and paid by the New York Presbytery.

None of these congregations make a go of it without missionary money. Here's where we need to work.

Not only is there competition among various denominations, making it difficult to support the downtown congregations without the aid of people outside their immediate territory, but there is also competition within individual church bodies. Often there seem to be too many churches of one denomination in the center of the city. Many of these congregations have a great struggle to exist and must depend for their support primarily upon members who live at a distance.

Type 2. The Pastor Acts When Interest Is Shown

Approximately one-third of the ministers (the same proportion as conformed in general to Type 1) refuse to go after members of distant churches in the same city or its suburbs who have moved into their territory. But they do ask such persons to unite with their church if they have been attending services for some time. This practice is defined in concrete terms by one pastor's statement:

I would ask a person to join my church if he attended for several months, but asking people immediately when you know nothing about them is all wrong. If they were in attendance regularly, I should speak with them rather than wait until they asked.

A case is recited by one minister which illustrates this principle when it is carried into practice.

Some young people started a connection with our church through the Young People's Forum. The family then came to the church services. After several months I said, "You have really made this your church home and yet you have your membership in the other congregation. Why don't you transfer your membership to this church?" The transfer was made. It probably is best to get in touch with the other pastor first, but I have not done that in practice.

Type 3. The Initiative and Responsibility Are Entirely with the Prospective Member

The third type of practice, in which clergymen refuse to take any initiative in securing members of other churches who have moved into their community, is more general than either of the two others, and is more common among city and suburban pastors than in rural districts. Some pastors report this, however, as well as one of the other types, suggesting that circumstances determine their practice. The attitude of these men is, on the whole, that church membership is a matter upon which the person himself must decide and that one minister should not interfere in any way with the membership of another. They do feel justified in accepting such persons, however, if requested to do so by the persons themselves. Their views are represented in the following statements, which illustrate some of the complicating features of typical cases.

It is unworthy of me to take members from another minister, but we must always remember that individuals have rights and if any individual chooses without any persuasion from you to unite with your church you have no right to stop him.

I will not steal sheep. I will not pick on the members of any church. When . . . church had the language difficulty, I could have raided the sheep. If people get in a scrap they always want to go somewhere else. Many churches get their members from other congregations. It is no credit to a man to build up a church in that way. I have had chances to get members but would not. A man belongs to Doctor . . .'s church. The man is one of my best friends, and with a little persuading I could get him. He comes to my service occasionally. I call at his home always when there is a sick person, but I would not think of asking him to join my church.

I never ask a person who is a member of another church to join my group even though he has been attending my

services regularly. I let the suggestion come from him. Sometimes I get in touch with the minister and sometimes I tell him to get in touch with his pastor. In some cases we look into the situation very carefully. There may be a special reason for the transfer. Sometimes people have worked one church all they can and now they want to work us. I do not ask any one to come in because he has been disgruntled in another congregation. He will probably cause trouble for us.

A few ministers even go to the extent of discouraging people who are considering the changing of their membership from some other church in the city. Some of these men have large congregations and are not in need of such members to maintain their church organization. Others, as in the following instance, consider it a proper ethical standard to discourage transfer.

I am not interested in getting members from other churches. I am interested in the unchurched. Even if a member of another congregation attends my services for some time, I would feel an obligation not to ask that person to join. That would have to be on their initiative and not mine. If they do ask, I tell them to go to their own minister and talk it over. It is the duty of the person to get the letter of transfer.

The Urban-Rural Problem

The points of view so far expressed characterize not only the city-suburban situation but also the relations between country and city churches. Many people have moved into towns and cities not far distant from their previous country residence. It is oftentimes difficult for these people to be present at worship services in the country, and they begin to attend the city church. Some of them can be persuaded to unite with the congregation in the city, while others remain loyal to their rural group. The country pastor, being in need of financial support from non-resident members to maintain his church organization, sometimes resents any effort on the part of the city ministers to effect a transfer. A typical attitude of

the rural clergy, according to one man, is contained in the statement, "You city fellows leave my members alone."

On the other hand, some of the clergymen in the city recognize that the rural church cannot support itself without aid from these non-resident members and are also convinced that the country parish has a right to exist. Therefore, they make no attempt to transfer these persons. Yet they realize that in some cases persons who refuse to transfer their membership on the basis of loyalty to the country church are merely dodging responsibility, since they do not support the work in either congregation.

Occasionally the situation is just reversed. Members belonging to a city congregation move out into the country in the neighborhood of a rural church. Again there is a loyalty to the group of their early membership.

The problem of the country parish is also intensified in some districts by the fact that many of the rural people of better financial standing drive in to the city church, which oftentimes affords a better program and perhaps a better social status. As a professor¹ in one of the seminaries put it, those who do not have transportation to the cities, such as the aged and the widows with a number of children, are left in the poorly equipped rural church. Since some of the rural churches cannot receive sufficient support from the aged and widows, their doors are being closed. The country districts are fast becoming festering slums.

Obtaining the Letter of Transfer

Presumably the essential issues in the matter of changes of membership are those already dealt with, the question of whether and how letters of transfer are obtained being of secondary importance. Nevertheless it is just at this point that the issues often become concrete and personal since it is with the letter that the transfer is actually effected in most instances, and hence we must take into consideration the manner or etiquette of securing the

¹Professor Malcolm Dana.

letter. But opinions differ radically as to what is the proper and courteous procedure. In consequence, irritation and sometimes rather strong antagonism is aroused.

Some three-fourths of the ministers are in the habit of personally requesting the letter of transfer from the other pastor concerned. A few also check the alternative procedure, which seems to be the more or less general practice of about 40 per cent of all the ministers.

Those who ask persons to bring their own letters have definite reasons for the practice. Some hold that these people owe an explanation to their pastor for their desiring to leave, and that this affords an opportunity to correct any difficulty that may have arisen in the past between these persons and their pastor. Others state that the practice will tend to get rid of church tramps; that it will stop ambitious clergymen from transferring people to their churches when such persons have not taken any initiative in the matter; and that it makes for better relations among ministers.

As already noted, however, the more general practice is for the pastor to make contact with the other church and ask for the letter of dismissal. Apparently this procedure also works quite satisfactorily. Those who act in this manner feel it still gives the other minister a chance to hold his members, and that if he has a desire to keep them he will probably inform the pastor making the request. They state also that it is better for the minister to secure the letter, since it is often difficult to persuade the person to ask for it. Some state that the clergy are always ready to respond when a letter is solicited.

This practice is sometimes resented, however, by the clergy who feel that the persons themselves should seek the transfer. We cite a case in point:

I received a communication from Doctor . . . , requesting a letter of transfer for one of my members. This woman who was transferring had a daughter who belonged to that church. Doctor . . . , in his letter to me said, "Of course,

you will readily appreciate that it is much better to have all members of a family belonging to the same church." I went to see the woman and asked her why she did not come to me to get her letter of transfer. I told her I thought she owed at least an explanation to her pastor and perhaps a word of appreciation for the service that has been given her during the past years. She replied that she had asked Doctor . . . whether she should get her letter and he said, "Oh, no, we will get it for you." I explained to her that the statement of Doctor . . . , in which he says it is better to have all members of a family in the same church, did not mean anything to me. If I were operating upon that principle I would long ago have asked her daughter to join my church.

Not only is there resentment toward the practice of one pastor requesting another for the letter of dismissal, but sometimes there is definite refusal to grant the request. This seems to be more frequent among men in some denominational groups than in others.

When there is a refusal to issue letters, what conduct follows on the part of the clergymen? In such cases, a few men (about 7 or 8 per cent) will not receive the person desiring to be transferred. Presumably the remaining 93 p.c. will. In any case, about half the men positively admit that they will receive these persons without a letter, if they are convinced the pastor is in the wrong. The latter practice is justified on the ground that "the member should be the one to determine what is to be done. He knows what he wants."

In some cases ministers accept persons from other churches in the same city without asking for a letter of transfer at all. This is true of about 5 per cent of the clergy.

Others argue that the above procedure is unfair. They think a pastor should be notified so that he has an opportunity to win back his members. When this criticism was made, one of those who did not ask for letters responded, "What difference does it make where the person goes to church? Maybe we consider the other

pastor too much." A second saw nothing unethical in the procedure.

There are evils, however, growing out of such procedure. The following statement brings them to light:

Some churches take in members and do not even notify you that the persons have been received. I heard of one woman who was on the roll of three churches. She was a member here, joined another and then later a third, and she was not a church tramp. We were not notified that she had united with another church and neither was the second church informed that she had joined a third. That is unwarranted carelessness on the part of the ministry. I never take in a member without making careful inquiry about former connections. One should always get in touch with the pastor of the other church first. It cheapens church membership in the minds of people.

Fortunately, not a large number of the clergy adhere to this type of practice.

There are a few other ministers who do not make contact with a pastor before receiving one of his members, but they do send him a notice later that the person has united with them and should be dropped from his roll. The questionnaire returns show that about 5 per cent of the clergy follow this procedure. One of the group believes most other churches are not preaching a Gospel that will bring salvation to people and thinks, therefore, that he is acting properly in the matter. He says:

We do not take anybody from another church by letter. Even though they are members of some other church, we require them to make a confession of faith. This, however, must be a voluntary matter. In such case, I send a note and tell the minister this person has united with our church by confession of faith and should be dropped from his roll.

Transfer of Members and Denominationalism

A final problem regarding transfer of church members revolves around the practice of men in one denomination taking in mem-

bers of a church belonging to a different church body. The situation is rather well stated by Doctor Leach.

The breakdown of denominationalism has made the relationship with his fellow minister rather precarious. There is always the temptation to step into another's pasture and pick the choicest of the flock. There was a time when, if a Methodist came to town, it was assumed that he would continue to be a Methodist. That holds no longer, however. Denominational lines do not mean very much. People are constantly changing from one denomination to another when the second offers advantage of location or some other virtue.

The live and alert minister naturally wants his church to grow. He wants the new people coming to town to interest themselves in it. How can he do that and not lay himself open to the charge of proselyting? If the new family is of his own denomination, the way is clear. He can go and directly invite them to unite with his church. If they come from another persuasion, it is perfectly legitimate for him to invite them to attend his church, leaving their decision for membership to their good judgment later on.²

That denominationalism is breaking down, or seems of little significance to people, receives considerable support from the ministers on the field. A Lutheran clergyman says,

I have used the illustration of the man who was a Methodist in a certain town, then moved and became a Lutheran because of the social standing of the Lutheran church in that town. Later he became a Presbyterian and then an Episcopalian. Theological differences meant nothing to this man. We will get more church union when Lutherans become Presbyterians and vice versa.

A Baptist minister also recognizes the problem of transfer to be an interdenominational one. He says:

This matter comes up consistently. We lose members and

²Leach, William H., *Church Administration*, p. 29. Copyright, 1931. Used by permission of the publishers, Cokesbury Press.

gain some. It is an interdenominational problem. We fail to hold some people for various reasons. The fault is sometimes with us. People become offended, go to another church, and find a happy home there.

Some ministers are quite critical of these clergy who attempt to secure members of churches of a different denominational group. These men apparently have a strong sectarian consciousness. They believe in adhering to denominational lines and recommend that people stay within their church body. When other pastors attempt to bring to their church persons of another general church group, these men do not like it.

Whether these problems of transfer of members go much deeper than likes and dislikes, pride, and the struggle for survival and success is a question that needs investigation. The claim that little, or at least inadequate, attention is being paid by ministers to the fundamental sociological factors involved, which was made at the beginning of the chapter, seems justified. A professional code which can deal realistically with "sheep stealing" is evidently a long way off.

GIVING SERVICE TO MEMBERS OF OTHER CHURCHES

Possibly it is in the giving of service to individuals that the ministry and medicine most closely resemble each other, not merely in that fees may be involved, but also in the relatively personal character of the relationship. The particular issue of concern in this chapter is the issue of trespass. Physicians are quite strict about intruding in a case which is presumably in the hands of another physician. Their code, at least, does not warrant interference with another's practice, even when they belong to differing schools of medical theory and are concerned lest, for lack of their own peculiar skill, the patients of other doctors die. Some of the basic reasons for this hands-off policy are apparent enough, though the refusal to assist when the patient himself desires it, without the consent of the doctor who has had charge of a case,

reveals an attitude which has in it more of concern for the status than the function of the profession.

The opposite extreme characterizes the ministry. Only about 1.5 per cent refuse services, such as calling on the sick, conducting funerals, and officiating at weddings when requested to do so by others than members of their own churches. Does this imply too little regard for the rights and privileges of brother ministers?

Of course the answer cannot be dogmatic and one should have in mind what the ministers do, as well as what they refuse to do. The picture is not altogether clear, as they do so many different things, according to "circumstances." But a rough indication of trends in practice may be gained from the answers to check lists presented to our 823 cases.

Visiting the Sick and Conducting Funerals

The first list related to calling in cases of illness, and to the conduct of funerals. These were the various practices, and the figures in parentheses are the percentages checking each practice.

"If a member of another church in the same community is ill and I am requested to call or if a member of another church dies and I am requested to conduct the funeral (If your practice varies, check more than one statement):"³

1. I refuse (1.5)
2. I call the pastor of such person (37)
3. I tell them to get in touch with their own pastor (34)
4. I ask why they do not call their own pastor (49.6)
5. I call the pastor and if he tells me to give the service, I respond (46.6)
6. I give the service and report to the pastor later (18.5)
7. I call the pastor first and if I cannot get in touch with him I give the service (31)
8. I call the pastor and if he refuses to give me permission to serve the people without adequate reason, I will serve them anyway (17)

³The items have been rearranged and grouped to accord with the discussion which follows.

9. I give the service and do not report to the pastor (13)
10. If the person tells me he dislikes his pastor, I serve him (18)

No outstanding denominational differences were found save in regard to the third and fifth practices. Here the Lutherans, with considerably greater frequency than the rest, either tried to get those in need to call their own pastor or served only with the other pastor's consent. The latter practice was also far more distinctive of the graduates of Biblical Seminary (Interdenominational) than of the rest.

A quick scanning of the percentages conforming to the various practices listed will show that, although very few actually refused to serve the members of another church, a considerable proportion only assented to such service under conditions which more or less protected the interests of their fellow ministers. From more to less, the whole body of respondents fell roughly into three groups.

Among the first group, there is the desire to do nothing that will in any way affect a fellow clergyman adversely (items 1 to 5). The maintaining of friendly relations between ministers seems of primary consideration. The second group seems to occupy a middle ground (items 6 to 8). The men of this group try to maintain a balance in their attitude toward pastor and people. Almost a third of all the ministers attempt to get in touch with the rightful pastor for his approval, but if he cannot be located the service will be performed. At the other extreme (items 9 and 10) is the group which places the personality of those requesting service above the rights of pastors involved. These men feel that if a person desires some clergyman, other than his own minister, to officiate at a funeral or to call upon the sick, that person's wish should be respected.

The viewpoint of the most careful group is represented in the following statements:

I try not to call on people who are under the pastoral care of some one else. Some one called me the other day and

wanted me to come to the home. I did. The lady said she had been attending Doctor . . .'s church and she had called him to come and give communion, but he had not yet arrived. I got there before he did. I told her that was not fair to him and excused myself. I almost always report such a case to him. We are working together most harmoniously.

If a person of another church was dying and sent a call for me to come, I would immediately get in touch with the minister of that person's church and tell him I had been requested to call and would make sure he knew the person was sick and had a chance to perform his ministry.

Perhaps the most extreme of the opposite form of practice is that where the minister performs some service for members of another church, and does not even report the matter to their pastor, either before the service is rendered, or after. The list of practices given above shows that 13 per cent act in this manner. One minister comments, "I call on any persons where there is need or evidence of neglect by their own pastor." Others, while they do not lay down a rule which they think all must follow, do feel that for themselves they prefer to serve when asked because they believe this procedure causes less difficulty than would result from their refusal. A case in point is given:

This is a very delicate question. Every one must use his own judgment. If any one asks me to officiate at a funeral, I do not ask to what church he or she belongs. I simply do it. To refuse or investigate will complicate matters. However, after the funeral, if I discover that the family belongs to another church, I do not encourage any of them to come to mine. Often I am called to officiate for members of the Roman Catholic Church. The priest and I are very good neighbors.

A practice based upon the same principle of persons first and clergy second is that where the minister says he will help people of another church if such people say they do not like their pastor. There are 18 per cent who sometimes act in this way. Typical

comments of those who have this type of practice are as follows: "Not with the idea of getting him to join my church"; "But I don't run down the pastor"; "It seems to me personality has some rights. If possible I try to secure the pastor to share the service with me." The practice of one man is to try to find the cause and a remedy for the difficulty. Then he adds, "If a strong antagonism, I serve."

The third general attitude is represented by those who attempt to keep in mind the just claims of both pastor and people (items 6, 7, 8). This is somewhat a middle ground between the two other viewpoints, and is perhaps best represented by the clergy who render service to members of another church if they have been unable to locate the minister of that church. They have attempted to keep the rights of the pastor in mind, but at the same time they do not refuse to minister to people on the technicality that the pastor concerned has not been informed in the matter. Some 31 per cent act in this manner.

Under the same general view is the practice of performing a service and making a report to the pastor later. A small group of the clergy (18.5 per cent) state that they do this in some cases. Different explanations are given by them for their procedure. "In case of a funeral," says one man, "the family have the right to the services of the pastor desired." Other comments are: "Why start an argument with people in trouble?" "Sometimes I ask the person to report to his minister."

Although they are trying to keep the prerogatives of their fellow clergymen in view, some believe that the wishes of the people should be given primary consideration. These men state that they get in touch with the pastor when they are requested to render some service for members of another church, but if he refuses to grant them permission to minister to these people without an adequate reason, they will serve them anyway. There are 17 per cent who follow this practice. Some of the explanations for the conduct are contained in the following statements: "The people's

wishes are more important than the pastor's"; "Illness and death are emergencies. Unreasonableness and stubbornness dare not stand in the way of service for those who need spiritual help in their dark hours." One pastor who follows this practice says, "Why shouldn't I?" Another thinks it is permissible "in extreme cases."

As has been stated previously, one cannot rigidly classify the clergy according to one view or the other. The general or most usual practice may place a man in one group, but occasionally a situation arises in which he acts in just the opposite way. The typical response in regard to such matters is that they "use their judgment." They sometimes cite cases in which they feel it is difficult to know what procedure to follow. The following incident illustrates the point:

A father and his daughter were members of my church in . . . They lived in the home of the father's sister, or the girl's aunt. The father died and the girl made arrangements with me to officiate at the funeral. When I arrived at the house for the funeral another minister opened the door and very curtly informed me that the aunt had called him from another town, as her pastor, to conduct the funeral. All I could do was to say, "Go ahead." The girl was present and much disturbed about it. She apologized later and said that the aunt had taken everything out of her hands. If I had insisted there at the funeral, there would have been a scene.

Occasionally ministers, even though they may be acting upon the best motives, get into difficulty with a fellow clergyman in this matter of calling upon the sick or conducting a funeral service. A pastor recites his experience as follows:

The only time I was ever criticized was by a Missouri Lutheran preacher. I called at the home of one of his members, but the daughter of this person was a member of my church. The mother was sick and out of respect to the daughter I called. The mother died and they wanted me to

assist in the funeral service, but he told them I should not have called. He also wrote me a letter.

Once in a while, too, a minister criticizes another pastor, feeling that this pastor is attempting to proselyte through giving service to members of other churches. One man says:

I found a pastor in the city who was visiting a sick member of my church and praying at the bedside. He said he dropped in merely as a friend. I did not push him as to why he continued to do it every week. I think he has taken away several members, but do not have definite facts.

On the whole it appears that, although no one type of practice is adhered to by as many as half the clergy, there is a strong tendency to give first consideration to their fellow pastors in this matter of visiting the sick and conducting funerals for members of other churches.

Officiating at Weddings of Members of Other Churches

The second check list to which reference has been made provided various lines of possible action in case a minister was requested to officiate at the weddings of members of other churches. The list follows, together with the percentages (in parentheses) reporting each practice. As in the case of calling and the conduct of funerals, there is considerable overlapping in the answers, as the form of the question anticipated. And as in the other types of service, definite refusal to intrude on the territory of other ministers is rare (1.7 per cent).

"If members of another church come to me to be married:"⁴

1. I refuse (1.7)
2. I advise them to go to their own pastor (39)
3. I get in touch with the pastor and if he approves, I marry them (28)
4. I get in touch with the pastor and if he refuses, I will

⁴As with the previous list, the items are rearranged for convenience in discussion.

not marry them even though his reason may not seem adequate to me (22)

5. If they have a good reason for not going to their own pastor or for coming to me, I marry them (62)

6. I get in touch with the pastor and if he refuses without adequate reason, I marry them (11)

7. I marry them without reporting to the pastor (25)

It is not necessary to examine the details of these practices. The clergy fall into three groups as before: The extremely cautious (items 1 to 4); the middle group, striving for a balance of interests (items 5 and 6); and the individualists (item 7). The largest single grouping (62 per cent) is that of those who marry couples who request it if they have a good reason for not going to their own pastor, or a good reason for coming to them.

A part of this number justify their practice by saying, "If they come to me, that is sufficient reason." Others indicate that when "the pastor is entirely out of sympathy with his young people" one has a valid ground. Still others base their practice upon the view that the persons involved should be permitted to select the minister. Typical comments follow:

People who are married have a right to choose their own clergyman.

They have a good reason or they would not come. I hold that people have a right to choose who shall marry them, and that it is their own business whether they come to me from another minister or go from me to another minister.

The extreme leftists (25 per cent), who give primary consideration to the rights of the persons concerned, state that they marry those who are members of another church without reporting to their pastor. This may not be done in all cases, but comments of these men indicate that it is "usually" or "sometimes" their practice. Some seminary groups act differently in this matter from others. The two groups with most men following the practice are

Bangor and Colgate-Rochester with 35 p.c. each. The two with the fewest men checking the practice are Mt. Airy with 8 p.c. and Berkeley with 15 p.c. These are large and reliable differences,⁵ and suggest not only possible denominational differences, but also, since the two Lutheran groups differ considerably from each other, as do also, though less radically, the three Congregational groups, a difference in seminary attitudes. This is one of the very few points at which differences among seminaries seem to have any possible independent significance.

In spite of numerous criticisms against the practice, the majority of the clergy seem to officiate at weddings, without any regard to church membership lines.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PREDECESSOR AND SUCCESSOR

A third area in which ethical problems arise is in the relations between predecessor and successor. The clergymen interviewed, however, showed such agreement in the matter that the problem will be given only passing comment. The general attitude is that a minister should not hesitate to ask his predecessor to come back to give service to his people, especially if requested to do so by those within his congregation. On the other hand, they hold that a pastor should not return to the field of his successor if it is possible to excuse himself. In any case he should not return without first getting in touch with his successor or asking those who request his service to do so. Even then he should insist that his successor have a share in any ministerial service performed. Statements of these views follow:

If people in my former congregation wanted me for any service, I would try to dissuade them from having me. If I could not, then I would be sure that the pastor was willing. Even then I would not take the whole service without the other minister's having an important part in it. There are a great many false loyalties built up by pastors in that way.

⁵The difference between Colgate-Rochester and Mt. Airy is 5.3 S.D.

If any one wanted a former pastor to come in, I would accept and abide by that choice.

I allow my predecessor to come back. Never talk unkindly about a predecessor. If he is liked well, it is better for you to let him come back. If a minister is not liked by a family, let him invite the predecessor back and he will make them friends.

Although these principles regarding the predecessor and successor seem to be fairly well understood by the ministers interviewed, there was some criticism of others on this point. The following statements are typical:

A number of ministers are very careless and do not seem to have thought these things out. To go into a former parish for a funeral except by the request of the pastor is highly improper and leads to ill feelings. If it seems much desired by the family they ought at least to go to the minister of the church and explain so as to save the returning minister from being put into the embarrassing position of an intruder.

One man who left his parish because of a quarrel kept returning to serve his faction for funerals. It kept the parish divided and old animosities alive.

The clergy state also that it is the duty of the man leaving the parish to prepare the way for the man who is coming, so that he may get hold of his task in the best possible way and that his work may be most effective.

FACTS AND ISSUES

If the behavior of the majority of a professional group is the basis of the codes guiding their practices, a professional code for the ministry would contain some startling provisions, such as,

"I shall not let any false ideas about the rights of other ministers interfere with my efforts to get members. The church (that is, my church) must go on"; or

"I shall base my membership appeals on the needs of my church

for support, not on considerations of the best interests of the whole cause of religion"; or

"I shall conduct weddings for those who ask it of me, without too much concern for the church relations of the persons involved."

Many reasons are given by ministers for what other ministers would call proselyting, which are plausible enough. People should have a sense of community responsibility; it is expensive to go to church at a distance; there is too much duplication of effort when churches try to draw members from a distance; distant members do not attend regularly; the downtown church cannot survive without distant members, nor can the country church survive without drawing on the support of those who now go into the city to church. There is no general agreement on practice or on reasons for any practice, either in the matter of how members are solicited or on how letters of transfer are obtained. This difference in practice is the source of the misunderstanding and irritation that seem to characterize the attitude of many pastors toward their fellow ministers. The lack of courtesy involved in and issuing from these misunderstandings is too common to be lightly overlooked.

Similar difficulties arise in giving service to the ill and in conducting funerals and weddings. Motives are obviously mixed, not only in the profession as a whole, but in individual ministers, who feel inclined to act one way, but constrained by the need of individuals, or their sense of duty, or their conceptions of what their church demands, or their own self-interest, to act in another way.

The net result, no matter what the intention, is that unsolved problems of professional relationships hamper the service which the church should render to individuals and jeopardize the very existence of many local institutions. One also gets the strong impression that one of the difficulties in the way of better understanding among ministers is the sense of insecurity. Unregulated competition bears down on many churches that are most needed

and whose lifeblood is, perhaps inevitably, being drained into other veins. Merely to hold on to members who have moved away is no solution.

Within a system of competitive relations certain courtesies make for the amelioration of otherwise intolerable conditions. Such courtesies, however, lack absolute validity as ethical principles, since the system itself is of dubious merit. On ethical grounds, it violates the principle of respect between human beings, and on sociological grounds, it is wasteful, and destructive of the very conditions under which churches may be expected to work, grow, or even survive. Consideration of these more basic problems of church co-operation and adjustment would seem to be called for, rather than recrimination and complaint at the absence of what, from a purely individualistic view, might be regarded as a high standard of professional ethics.

Chapter VI

SPECIAL PRIVILEGES

The privileges with which this chapter is concerned are financial only. But since the problem of financial privilege is one that has long concerned the expositors of social ethics, it will probably furnish enough issues to justify giving it some attention.

It might be thought at first glance that the problem is not worth discussing, particularly if one believes the current saying that "only saps pay retail prices." Too much conscience might leave the ministry the only group paying its way. Of course the problem is local in any case. It grows out of our strong tendency toward a fixed price system of retailing. In the Near East, where prices are more generally a matter of private agreement between seller and buyer, the notion of discounts and rebates would be irrelevant.

Granted our present methods of doing business, however, problems of privilege do actually arise, and the minister is placed in the position of having to decide whether and to what extent he will be the recipient of special favors because of his calling. Thought of in this way, there is a certain urgency about the issues raised, owing to a widespread tendency to question the motives of all professional groups. As a result some of the clergy are beginning to examine themselves to determine whether they are demonstrating loyalty to their professional ideal. For example, a church conference was held in Chicago in the latter part of 1932 at which the ministers present issued a warning to the clerical profession concerning the acceptance of special privileges, lest such favors make their work ineffective. We quote a statement from the report:

In the second place, those attending the Chicago Conference showed a heartening readiness to follow the inevitable

logic of the facts and to make the necessary adjustments. When business men and labor-union officials were shown in some cities to be seeking special privileges by unholy alliances with gangsters, the conference had the honesty and courage to declare, "We urge that the churches and their clergy begin by disentangling themselves from the evils of the system of special privileges by refusing to accept favors or emoluments which might lessen their influence or silence their voices in matters of public righteousness."¹

What are the facts as to the practices and attitudes of the ministry in these regards? Is the danger mentioned in this report exaggerated? We shall give evidence relating to four types of financial consideration granted more or less frequently to ministers, *viz.*, discounts in stores, the clergy fare, reduction in college fees to children of ministers, and free service to ministers by doctors. Possibly the most pertinent of the findings are the arguments brought forward to defend the acceptance of special privileges. It is here that the quality of ethical thinking among the clergy is most clearly revealed.

DISCOUNTS IN STORES

The Practice

The offering of discounts does not appear to be a universal practice. Only 7 per cent of the pastors state that the offer is made always or usually. The majority, or 53 p.c., report that the offer is made sometimes, 37 p.c. say rarely, and 3.4 p.c. indicate they are never tendered a discount.

It is the general view of the clergy that discounts are not offered to the same extent today as in former years. Testimony received from the managers of a few stores corroborates this view.

This store did give discounts some years ago before I came,

¹Report of a Conference on "The City and the Church in the Present Crisis," held in Chicago, November 29-December 2, 1932. *Federal Council Bulletin*, 26: p. 5; January, 1933. Quoted by permission.

but it does not have the practice now. Personally I do not know why there should be a discount given, do you? Stores all over the country have come to the conclusion that giving reductions to special classes of people has been abused and department stores have retrenched. You may find many who still follow the practice but you will also find many who formerly gave discounts who do not do so now.

The important consideration, however, is the extent to which discounts are accepted or requested. As shown in Table VI more

TABLE VI
PERCENTAGE OF MINISTERS ACCEPTING DISCOUNTS
OFFERED BY STORES

	ALL	MOST	SOME	FEW	NONE
Bangor (Cong.).....	32	7	20	28	13
Hartford (Cong.).....	48	12	18	20	2
Yale (Cong.).....	30	13	31	24	2
Gettysburg (Luth.).....	41	18	24	6	12
Mt. Airy (Luth.).....	41	15	15	15	13
Auburn (Presby.).....	39	12	23	14	11
Berkeley (Epis.).....	59	15	11	11	4
Colg.-Roch. (Bapt.).....	33	20	22	18	7
Drew (Meth.).....	45	16	14	18	7
Bib. Sem. (Inter-denom.).	44	6	29	18	3
Average.....	42.2	13.4	20.7	17.2	7.4

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who are offered discounts in stores, 32 per cent accept all, 7 p.c. most, 20 p.c. some, 28 p.c. few, and 13 p.c. none. Similarly read figures for each seminary.

than half the clergy accept all or most (54.6 per cent), 21 p.c. accept some, 17 p.c. few, while 7.4 p.c. refuse all discounts offered. Considering the first two columns (all and most) together, Berkeley (74 p.c.) has the largest number of men accepting, while Bangor (39 p.c.) has the fewest. This difference is highly reliable.²

²The difference is 3.5 S.D.

The remaining seminaries in decreasing order are Drew 61 p.c., Hartford 60 p.c., Gettysburg 59 p.c., Mt. Airy 56 p.c., Colgate-Rochester 53 p.c., Auburn 51 p.c., Biblical Seminary 50 p.c., and Yale 43 p.c.

Some of the clergy ask for discounts if the offer is not made. Table VII indicates that about one-fourth make the request. It is

TABLE VII
PERCENTAGE OF MINISTERS REQUESTING A DISCOUNT
ON PERSONAL PURCHASES

	ALL	MOST	SOME	FEW	NONE
Bangor (Cong.).....	..	1	4	10	85
Hartford (Cong.).....	8	17	75
Yale (Cong.).....	3	14	83
Gettysburg (Luth.).....	12	18	71
Mt. Airy (Luth.).....	12	19	69
Auburn (Presby.).....	3	9	88
Berkeley (Epis.).....	12	23	65
Colg.-Roch. (Bapt.).....	1	..	6	13	80
Drew (Meth.).....	..	1	5	17	77
Bib. Sem. (Inter-denom.)..	12	27	61
Average.....	.1	.2	7.7	16.7	75.4

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who filled our questionnaires, 1 per cent state that if a discount is not offered for personal purchases, they ask for it in most cases, 4 per cent ask for it in some cases, 10 p.c. in a few cases and 85 p.c. never request a discount. Similarly read figures for each seminary.

not a general practice among those who make the request, however, there being only .3 per cent who ask in all or most cases, 8 p.c. in some instances, while 17 p.c. have sought discounts rarely. This privilege is never solicited by 75 p.c.

If we consider the first four columns of Table VII together (all, most, some, and few), and combine the responses of men in

ritualistic churches (Episcopal—Berkeley 35 per cent; Lutheran—Gettysburg 30 p.c. and Mt. Airy 31 p.c.), we get an average of 32 p.c. who ask for the discount. In a similar manner by combining the responses of clergy in the non-ritualistic churches (Congregational—Bangor 15 p.c., Hartford 25 p.c. and Yale 17 p.c.; Presbyterian—Auburn 12 p.c.; Baptist—Colgate-Rochester 20 p.c.; and Methodist—Drew 23 p.c.) there is an average of 19 p.c. requesting a discount on their purchases. This is a significant difference in practice between men in these two types of churches.³

One minister says, "Some preachers definitely ask for discounts. They put their 'dog collar' on when they do their purchasing." A second states, "I knew of one man who asked for a discount even at filling stations."

Further evidence that some clergy seek such special treatment was secured through interviews with the managers of a few stores. For example:

Never have we had a minister refuse to accept them. Generally they ask for the discount. They will say, "Isn't there a discount for the clergy?" We are always very glad to give it. There seems to be no distinction among the Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish clergy in this matter. One is as ready to ask as the other. If they don't make the request we give it to them.

Attitude of the Clergy Toward Discounts

But what do the ministers think of all this? Do they accept willingly? Do they feel that any ethical principle is involved? Do they accept under protest? Do they bring this practice into conformity with their consciences? Their arguments may be presented best by quotations, which for ease of consideration are presented in three groups: the pros, the cons, and the neutrals.

Some of those who favor the acceptance of discounts refer to what is done for other groups:

Discounts are given many people for many reasons. I see

³The difference between the two groups is 2.9 S.D.

no reason why a minister should not accept them when offered.

Some feel that the storekeeper's attitude is decisive:

If a discount is offered in a friendly spirit and not grudgingly, it is satisfactory to take it.

A storekeeper gave me a discount and said it was for his own benefit and not for the benefit of the pastor. In that way he is making a contribution to the community, and I think we should let him contribute in that way. Where I buy my shoes the dealer said, "I never go to church and do not give anything to the church, but maybe the Lord will forgive me if I give the minister a discount!"

In the few stores where the discount is still offered, the clerks are quite anxious to give it to you and to call your attention to the fact that there is a ministerial discount. In some remote way they perhaps think they are doing something for the church.

One pastor thinks that "if it is a rule of the firm one is justified in accepting a reduction in price." Another states that inasmuch as "discounts are entirely a matter of business with the grantors," one should not hesitate to accept them.

The group which is not in favor of receiving discounts from stores set forth a number of objections to them:

It is undemocratic in that favoritism or a subsidy is granted to a special class.

When the minister accepts a discount he is acting as though he were a Pullman porter and is on the charity of the public.

I do not like discounts. The minister ought to pay his own way. He ought not to be subsidized. He should not be a man of charity.

Accepting discounts is an offence to the minister's self-respect.

While I accept offered discounts at stores, I feel more and

more like refusing such courtesies. The true ministry is willing to give more in service than the church demands without additional remuneration.

Some of this number state that "the danger in accepting a discount is that it develops a sense of obligation and that one finds it difficult to speak out boldly to the man who has been kind to him."

The neutral or mixed group, many of whom accept discounts, say:

I want to be as independent as other men and feel that I should get salary enough so that I need no discounts.

I came to the conclusion that a congregation should pay its minister a living wage. Receiving such, he should not benefit by class privilege.

I believe ministers should be adequately enough paid so that they do not need to accept discounts at stores or in transportation.

I believe no regular rule can be established regarding discounts and passes. Ministers' salaries are many times shockingly inadequate and are based upon the assumption that the pastor is to receive gratuities of this kind. Every man must face this matter with his own conscience.

I don't think a minister should take discounts and yet I take them. I have a charge account in a number of stores and they automatically take the discount off the bill without my asking for it. I have asked in a couple of cases. It is a terrible thing for the minister to be always looking for things. It gives you a terrible feeling sometimes. That is the reason I try never to put myself under obligation to any person or persons.

Attitude of the Public Toward Discounts

One of the important points to be considered by ministers in accepting discounts, it would seem, is the reaction which the practice creates in the mind of the public toward the ministerial profession and the church. Does the practice affect the work of

the church adversely and does it lower the standing of the ministry? The opinion on this question varies. There are those who think this special privilege has no derogatory effect upon the church or its ministry. We quote typical comments:

As to whether our message would be more effective if we did not accept a discount, I don't think it makes any difference whatsoever.

You are not put in a privileged class when you receive discounts. Instead you are put in an underprivileged class. The attitude of the public is, "There goes an old codger who doesn't get enough to support himself." The average member doesn't look upon him as being in a privileged class.

There are others, however, who believe that both the church and the clergy suffer ill effects from the practice. Statements of their view follow:

Ministerial discounts are an abomination. The sooner they are wiped out the better it will be for the ministry and for religion. It is a bad custom which operates to make ministers seem more or less pensioners in the eyes of the public and operates to keep salaries down. Discounts work in with other things to make the minister seem an object of charity.

In a small town it is bad business for a minister to be looking for a discount, and especially from people who perhaps are poorer than he is.

I would be glad if it were done away. It may be all right for the head of the business. He is a church man and takes delight in doing it, but my impression is that clerks might be influenced away from the church because of it.

CLERGY FARE ON RAILROADS AND BUSES

A second special privilege to be considered is the reduced fare granted to ministers by railroads and buses. The Eastern and Western railroads charge only a half rate for clergymen, while the Southern roads permit pastors to travel at two-thirds the regu-

lar fare. Throughout New England, however, ministers must pay the same rate as others who travel by rail. With regard to bus charges, many companies are granting a 25 per cent reduction in rates to the clergy. To secure the clergy fare privilege on railroads an application must be sent to the clergy bureau along with a fee of \$2. If the application is approved a clergy fare ticket in book form containing one hundred coupons will be sent to the minister, each coupon being good for one ticket at the clergy rate. The fee for the book of coupons to be used on buses is \$1.

The Practice

As to the extent to which ministers use the reduced fare, 89 per cent of the graduates of seven seminaries avail themselves of the privilege on railroads. Inasmuch as a considerable proportion of Bangor, Hartford, and Yale graduates are located in New England where the reduction in rate is not granted, these groups are not included in this figure. There appears to be no significant difference among men of different church groups in this matter.

Of the 11 per cent who fail to take advantage of reduced rates, not all have any objection to the practice. Some have occasion to travel by railroad so seldom that they do not bother to make application for the book of coupons.

The clergy fare on buses is not used to the same extent as on railroads, there being only 26 per cent of the alumni of the seven seminaries who take advantage of the privilege. One reason for this difference is that ministers do not travel on buses as much as on trains. A second reason for the difference is that many of the clergy were not aware that buses give reduced rates.

Some ministers make a distinction between employing the fare for personal travel and using it for church purposes. Nearly four-fifths (79 per cent), however, use the privilege for personal travel as well as when travelling for church interests. There is no significant difference between seminary and denominational groups in this matter, nor any difference arising from the fact that the Luth-

eran churches more generally pay expenses to conferences than do other churches.

Attitude Toward the Clergy Fare

As has been indicated, the general practice of ministers is to make use of the privilege of reduced fare on the railroads. Various reasons are given by the clergy justifying their practice. Each statement contains a distinctive argument.

I never thought of it as having any ethical implication. All groups seem to have some special privilege, e.g., doctors are treated free by other doctors and merchants are given discounts by other merchants.

Inasmuch as the minister rarely receives adequate compensation for his public services I feel he is justified in accepting clergy reductions, if and when they are offered to him, but these should not make him a "special pleader" for the railroads.

Since men of almost any cultural interest can get a pass, the minister has just as much right to make use of the clergy fare privilege.

The clergy fare is used mostly for the larger work of the church such as conferences, meetings, etc., and very little for personal matters.

I had a clergy certificate in Pennsylvania and discovered most of my travelling was done for the denomination. I was Moderator for the Conference one year. Most of my long trips were to attend conferences.

Accepting the clergy fare will enable the minister to do better and greater service in that he will have more money to purchase books and can attend more conferences.

The railroads must consider it good business or they would not offer the fare to ministers. The clergyman has a right to accept, since the railroads have made the offer through their own free will.

The railroads think it is a good investment for them because the work of ministers in a community raises the moral

standards and there will be less pilfering and thieving of the railroads' property.

You are paying as much as it is worth to ride on the railroad even when using the clergy fare.

The railroads are robbing people anyway, so why should not the minister take advantage of the clergy fare?

A minority group are not in sympathy with this privilege of the clergy and do not believe the practice can be justified. Their arguments are of the following types:

I should be glad to see the time when no clergy fares are granted. As long as they are granted, I presume it is all right to accept them. I do not. I would not accept a baseball pass.

It is not democratic in that a special privilege is granted to a class.

I had a clergy pass, and every time I went into a station I felt I was an object of charity.

The clergy fare tends to make the minister less critical of the private ownership and operation of railroads and tends to make him, frequently unconsciously, a supporter of the present system. It is offered by the railroads as a covert bribe.

The views of a third group of ministers fall somewhere between those who are in favor and those who object to the practice. Some think the principle involved is one of need, and that under certain conditions the practice can be approved. The following comments indicate their attitude:

We still act upon the principle of not commercializing ministerial service. During student days when the railroad journeys were necessary each week, when the salary was \$600 per year, when war-time prices prevailed, and when it was necessary to maintain a parsonage upon the student appointment, I accepted the clergy fare on railroads and other discounts. This was discontinued when the salary became sufficient to pay full price and keep out of debt.

A district superintendent or synodical official in a big area

such as the Middle West, West, or South, is justified in accepting the clergy fare.

I also dislike clergy fares, but without them I would take very few long trips in which case both the railroads and I would lose.

Other clergymen indicate either that they now travel on reduced fares or that they have accepted the privilege. Yet they think the practice is undesirable or they are uncertain about it. Statements of their position are given below:

As to clergy fares, when in seminary I used a clergy book for personal use only because it was customary for students to do so. It probably is not right.

I accepted when such was available, but accepted with regret. I think the custom is undesirable.

I have remained hesitant in regard to clergy fares—use them only under protest to myself—but “guilty”—I use them.

REDUCTION IN TUITION IN COLLEGE TO CHILDREN OF MINISTERS

Reduction in college tuition was available for the children of 9 per cent of the clergy. Many of those consulted did not have children old enough to go to college. Almost three-fourths (73 p.c.) of those who could take advantage of the favor did so, while 27 p.c. did not.

As shown in Table VIII more than a third (36 per cent) of all the clergy consider the practice ethical and 18 p.c. unethical, while 46 p.c. say it depends upon the particular circumstances.

The judgment of ministers on this question does not seem to follow strictly denominational lines, but seems to vary with the seminaries—a type of difference not often found. Although Congregational graduates of Bangor, Hartford, and Yale consider the practice ethical in about equal proportions, there are 42 per cent of Bangor men, 17 p.c. of Hartford, and 21 p.c. of Yale graduates who say the practice is unethical, and a similar variation occurs among Bangor (27 p.c.), Hartford (50 p.c.), and

Yale (42 p.c.) men with regard to the number who think the circumstances of a particular case must be considered before one can determine whether the practice is ethical or unethical.

The Lutheran graduates of Gettysburg and Mt. Airy exhibit a similar difference of opinion. Gettysburg has 61 per cent as against 25 p.c. of Mt. Airy graduates who consider the practice ethical. Only a small number of men (Gettysburg 22 p.c. and Mt. Airy 13 p.c.) from these seminaries state that accepting a reduction in tuition is unethical, but 62 p.c. of the Mt. Airy graduates say one must take the circumstances of a specific case into consideration, while 17 p.c. of the Gettysburg men register the same view.

TABLE VIII

JUDGMENT OF MINISTERS AS TO WHETHER THE RECEIVING OF A REDUCTION IN TUITION IN COLLEGE BY CHILDREN OF MINISTERS, BECAUSE THEY ARE MEMBERS OF A MINISTER'S FAMILY, IS ETHICAL, UNETHICAL, OR DEPENDS UPON THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF ANY PARTICULAR CASE

	ETHICAL	UNETHICAL	DEPENDS
	%	%	%
Bangor (Cong.).....	31	42	27
Hartford (Cong.).....	33	17	50
Yale (Cong.).....	37	21	42
Gettysburg (Luth.).....	61	22	17
Mt. Airy (Luth.).....	25	13	62
Auburn (Presby.).....	40	14	46
Berkeley (Epis.).....	33	7	59
Colg.-Roch. (Bapt.).....	28	25	47
Drew (Meth.).....	51	6	43
Bib. Sem. (Inter-denom.).....	24	12	65
Average.....	36.3	17.9	45.8

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who check their judgment on the practice of children of ministers receiving a reduction in tuition in college because they are members of a minister's family, 31 per cent say it is ethical, 42 p.c. say it is unethical, and 27 p.c. say it depends upon the circumstances of any particular case. Similarly read figures for each seminary.

Factors other than mere chance selection of cases are at work to produce some of these differences. The difference between the proportion of Bangor graduates (42 per cent) and the proportion of Drew graduates (6 p.c.) who regard accepting reductions in fees as unethical is highly reliable,⁴ as is also the difference⁵ in the proportions of Biblical Seminary men (65 p.c.) and Gettysburg men (17 p.c.), who think each case should be considered separately.

We have noted that where ministers receive the offer of reduction in tuition for their children, about three-fourths of them accept. The general trend in opinion among the men who were interviewed seems to be in favor of the practice. The most usual statement in justification is that the minister would otherwise be unable to educate his children.

Because of the poor salaries the average minister can hope to receive, this practice is ethical. Financially he is not placed on a par with other professions.

I do not have any children so this does not affect me. Under the present system the average preacher would have to accept reduced tuition. Ministers' children are usually legion. The higher good is to get those youngsters educated. I can't imagine a minister thinking more of the college than he does of his children.

A third said, "A pastor can't educate his children without these aids." When he was questioned as to whether the clergyman has more right to educate his children than laymen have, his response was, "It pays society according to the record of people who have come out of the parsonage."

Other reasons offered by this group are:

I feel the minister should not accept reductions from business houses or railroads, but in case of colleges where scholarships are available, he should accept them. Also the reduction in tuition for his children should be accepted, since the

⁴The difference between Bangor and Drew is 6.4 S.D.

⁵The difference between Biblical Seminary and Gettysburg is 4.0 S.D.

minister has done much to aid education and often has little with which to help his children.

In the matter of college expenses: When my children are ready for college, I shall accept any reduction the college may make for the benefit of a clergyman's children. Most of our older colleges were founded by ministers and were for ministers, and the pastor's children should be a preferred class among the student body. Many colleges have scholarship funds expressly for this purpose. They should be used for this purpose and not sidetracked.

I wish it were not necessary for ministerial students or ministers' children to have reduced tuition, etc. Whether it is unethical, I do not know. Surely the average minister gives more to the community than he is paid for. Would that all such reductions could be abolished.

If it is the will of the college, I see no reason why the minister's family should not benefit by it.

A minority group, however, are not in favor of accepting a reduction in college tuition. One states:

I don't like the thought of treating a minister's child differently from any one else. I do not feel there should be reduced tuition. However, a loan is different. It is all right to receive a scholarship as a loan which is to be repaid later on. That is business.

FREE SERVICE BY DOCTORS AND DENTISTS

A fourth form of special recognition given the ministerial group is that of free service by doctors and dentists. The only information we have on this point was derived from the interviews of one hundred clergymen, and from these interviews no clear knowledge of the general practice was forthcoming. Some of these were of the opinion that the granting of this favor is on the decline. Nevertheless, a number of ministers indicated that it is still a practice of many doctors to make no charge.

Neither were the attitudes of the clergy clearly defined. Some

indicate that doctors and dentists merely consider it a professional courtesy when they render service without remuneration, just as they extend such courtesy to a practitioner in their own profession. One pastor comments:

I do not know what to say about this practice. If a doctor renders service to me, I feel as though I ought to pay him. However, he may consider it as a professional courtesy. One doctor does not charge another doctor. Thus he may feel he ought to extend the same relationship to the minister. The thing to be desired is a living wage for all ministers and then have them pay for all services as do others. You will find though that this cannot be attained in actual practice.

The practice of one pastor supplements this view of professional courtesy. He accepts fees or gratuities for weddings and funerals from most people, but he refuses such favors from ministers or doctors if they have served him without compensation.

A bad feature arising out of this free service, however, is that the minister may hesitate to call doctors or dentists lest he seem to be seeking a special favor. One pastor says, "Our doctor does not charge, so we get along many times without calling him."

Furthermore, a few men are of the opinion that these free services lower the standing of the ministry. Yet they accept because persons who grant the favor insist that they wish to make a contribution to the work of the church in this way.

FACTS AND ISSUES

Discounts

The acceptance of privileges is very common, and is usually uncriticized by the clergy. Only about 7 per cent of those involved in this study refuse all discounts. About one-fourth ask for them when they are not offered. The latter practice is more prevalent among the Episcopalians and Lutherans than among the other groups.

The practice is defended by many arguments: Other groups

than clergymen receive reductions; clerks and store owners feel they are contributing to the church and community in this manner; it is a matter of business with stores; there should be no objection if the offer is made in the right spirit and if it is a rule of the firm.

A second group object to the practice: It is undemocratic; it makes the clergyman seem an object of charity; it lowers his self-respect; the real minister is willing to serve without special favors; it develops a sense of obligation to the one who has granted the favor.

A third group hold to a middle ground. Some argue against the practice but indicate that inadequate salaries make acceptance necessary and state that in view of this fact no general rule can be applied. Others indicate they do not believe in the system, yet admit they receive the reduction and on occasion even solicit the privilege. Still others who accept, seemingly with a bad conscience, try to justify their practice.

As to whether the public reacts adversely toward the church as a result of this practice, there is no unanimity of opinion among the clergy.

Clergy Fares

Almost all clergymen use clergy rates on trains, where available. Approximately only one-fourth use the fare on buses. The latter is accounted for by the fact that many do not ride on buses and others did not know the reduction was available.

A few ministers avail themselves of the reduction only when travelling for church purposes. The majority, however, use the privilege for personal travel as well as for church interests. The use of the reduced fare seems not to be at all tied up with varying practices regarding the payment of expenses to conferences.

Here also numerous arguments are presented by clergymen favorable to the reduced fare. They state that ethics is not involved inasmuch as all groups seem to have some special privi-

lege; that almost any one representing a cultural interest can secure a pass on railroads; that the minister seldom receives sufficient compensation for his work; that the privilege is employed largely for church purposes, which increases the minister's efficiency and service; that railroads consider it a good investment and good business; and finally that railroads are overcharging people and the reduced fare is still adequate payment.

A minority group do not believe the practice can be justified. They consider it class privilege and undemocratic; that it lowers the minister's self-respect; and that there is danger the clergyman will become a supporter of private ownership of railroads because of the favor granted him.

A third group are not wholly committed to or against the practice. Some think that under certain conditions of need it can be approved. Others are somewhat uncertain in their minds and yet they often accept the reduction.

Reduction of College Fees

About three-fourths take advantage of reduction in college fees when this privilege is available. Less than one-fifth (18 per cent) say definitely that the practice is unethical. The remaining group consider either that it is ethical or depends upon the circumstances of a particular case. There are significant differences among the graduates of different seminaries on these points.

Most clergymen justify this special consideration on the ground of inadequate salaries; that ministers have been leaders in the development of education; and that special funds have been given for the purpose. A minority group are opposed to the practice. They prefer scholarships or loans administered on the same basis as to other students.

Free Service by Doctors

The fourth type of special recognition of ministers is the granting of free service by doctors and dentists. The practice is

not universal. There is no unanimity of feeling in the matter among the clergy and their attitudes are not clearly defined.

What Is Involved?

Certain problems arise from this discussion of special privileges. In the first place, a number of ministers seem to have given no thought to the ethics of these privileges. They have accepted the practice as custom and have not examined the custom to determine its validity. Should such customs be examined critically from the viewpoint of ulterior values? Is it to be assumed that clergymen are lacking in moral consciousness when they offer only prudential arguments in favor of a custom that many regard as unethical?

A second problem centers in the fact that some clergymen are convinced their work would be more effective if the practice of accepting special privileges were discontinued, yet they claim they are compelled to accept them because of inadequate salaries. In this case, ethical judgment demands a change in an unethical custom which continues from economic necessity. Presumably if necessity did not dictate the acceptance of privileges, no ethical problem would arise. Or is the ethical issue one of accepting privileges whether necessity demands it or not? Is the minister's position and influence jeopardized by this complexity of motives? Should efforts be directed toward freeing ministerial practice from economic determination by changing the basis of their support, or by changing their attitudes and practices with regard to special privileges?

Chapter VII

PERQUISITES

Fees, perquisites, honorariums, and gratuities are one aspect of the much larger problem of ministerial compensation.¹ Into this larger problem we cannot go here, although the ethical issues involved will inevitably hinge in part on the question of other sources of income and on the amount of the total income received. Variations in church practice in these respects account for much of the difference in attitude toward fees, but here, as in other areas of life, time often makes "ancient good uncouth."

In the early days of the country some church groups carried over practices originating in Europe, and in other cases local needs required that inadequate and uncertain salaries be supplemented by gifts of produce. It is no wonder that our variegated history has evolved no standard practice which could be embodied in a code. These historic facts, however, can hardly be regarded as settling forever the ethical questions involved in the receiving of fees for special services, especially in light of the efforts of both lay and clerical members to insure adequate salaries. If the giving of fees were still merely a way of getting ministers paid, the question of their propriety would be far simpler. As a matter of fact, many ministers feel that this is exactly the case and that no ethical problems are involved. Even so, pastors can hardly afford to ignore wide differences in practice among their own number, which inevitably raise questions in the lay mind as to what principles are really guiding the profession, and what motives are actuating their conduct.

We shall try to put as little strain on the reader's patience as possible in presenting the data bearing on this problem, although

¹See the study by F. Darcy Bone, cited on page 73.

their complexity makes a simple summary difficult. The first thing is to show the prevalence of the practice of feeing ministers for various functions, *viz.*, weddings, funerals, baptisms, private communion, confirmation classes, and lecturing. It will be seen that the practice varies among these different types of service and also as between those who belong to the local church and those who do not. Some reasons for these differences will be offered, and a few comments will be quoted relative to the amount of money received from such gratuities and the use made of it. The attitudes of ministers will then be presented, and as usual we shall conclude with a summary of the main facts and the issues arising therefrom.

PREVALENCE OF FEES

The more important facts for the entire group of pastors co-operating in this study are shown in Tables IX and X, the one portraying the frequency with which fees are offered and the other, the frequency with which they are accepted when offered.

TABLE IX

PERCENTAGES OF MINISTERS REPORTING THAT
PERQUISITES ARE OFFERED THEM FOR
VARIOUS FUNCTIONS

	AL- WAYS	USUAL- LY	SOME- TIMES	RARE- LY	NEVER
For Weddings—	%	%	%	%	%
By non-members.....	50.7	47.0	2.1	.1	..
By members.....	48.8	46.8	3.5	.9	..
For Funerals—					
By non-members.....	7.8	60.4	27.0	5.0	.2
By members.....	5.9	43.7	37.6	11.1	1.9
For Baptisms.....	2.1	15.4	19.8	38.8	24.0
For Sermons, Lectures, Talks, etc.....	1.0	17.5	46.2	27.8	7.4

Read table as follows: Of the graduates of ten seminaries, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who are offered perquisites for weddings by non-members, 50.7 per cent receive the offer always, 47 p.c. usually, 2.1 p.c. sometimes, and .1 p.c. rarely. Similarly read figures for each function.

In these tables can be read the differences in practice associated with the different functions of weddings, funerals, baptisms, and lectures, as well as the differences in practice as between church members and non-members. Table IX is chiefly of interest as showing the state of the custom of fee-giving, which places the minister in the position of having to accept or reject what is proffered. But it is with Table X that we are primarily concerned in

TABLE X
PERCENTAGES OF MINISTERS WHO ACCEPT
PERQUISITES FOR VARIOUS FUNCTIONS

	ALL	MOST	SOME	FEW	NONE
For Weddings—	%	%	%	%	%
From non-members....	64.3	28.9	6.5	.2	.2
From members.....	48.4	37.7	10.2	1.4	2.2
For Funerals—					
From non-members....	25.6	37.9	25.7	6.7	4.3
From members.....	8.2	26.5	36.6	14.2	14.1
For Baptisms.....	11.4	16.3	16.6	18.1	37.7
For Sermons, Lectures, Talks, etc.....	18.4	23.5	29.4	19.1	9.9

Read table as follows: Of the graduates of ten seminaries, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who are offered perquisites for weddings by non-members, 64.3 per cent accept all, 28.9 p.c. most, 6.5 p.c. some, .2 p.c. few, and .2 p.c. none. Similarly read figures for each function.

this study, *viz.*, the response made by the minister to prevailing custom. There are also a few differences among the denominational groups and seminary groups which will be noted in passing, although they are not included in these two tables.

It appears that the offering of fees for weddings is an almost universal practice by both church members and non-members alike. When marriage fees are presented to clergymen, it is likewise an almost universal practice for them to accept, although some pastors say they return them if the couple cannot afford

them. There is no significant difference in denominational practice in this matter.

A second function for which clergymen are presented gratuities is that of conducting funeral services. Tables IX and X show the extent to which these are offered and accepted in connection with this function. It appears that the giving of fees for funerals is not as general as for weddings. In the case of church members about half (49.6 per cent) of the ministers and in the case of the unchurched about two-thirds (68 p.c.) report that fees for this service always or usually are offered. The practice varies, however, both from church to church and among the graduates of different seminaries. More ministers of the Lutheran body (Mt. Airy 76 p.c. and Gettysburg 71 p.c.) than of any other group are always or usually presented with perquisites for this service. Among the groups offered fees to the smallest extent are the Episcopalians (Berkeley 30 p.c.), the Methodists (Drew 32 p.c.), one group of Congregationalists (Yale 35 p.c.) and a mixed group (Biblical Seminary 36 p.c.). The Baptists (Colgate-Rochester 54 p.c.), Presbyterians (Auburn 50 p.c.), and two groups of Congregationalists (Bangor 60 p.c. and Hartford 52 p.c.) occupy a middle ground. The difference between Lutherans and pastors of other church bodies is significant.²

If gratuities for funerals are not offered to the same extent as for marriages, neither are they accepted as frequently. Of those presented by non-members, only 63.5 per cent of the ministers accept all or most, and of those presented by members about a third (34.7 p.c.) accept all or most. Again, the various seminary groups show significant differences in practice, with the Lutheran clergy once more in the lead.³

It is an increasing practice, in connection with funerals of unchurched persons, for the undertaker to include on his bill a fee

²The differences between Mt. Airy and Berkeley, Drew, and Colgate-Rochester are respectively 4.6, 7.3 and 3.4 times the S.D. of the differences.

³The difference between Mt. Airy and Berkeley is 3.9 S.D. and between Mt. Airy and Auburn it is 3.1 S.D.

for the minister. Persons without church connection often request the undertaker to secure a pastor for the service. It is the feeling of the undertaker that the minister is entitled to something for his time. For this reason he sometimes asks the people concerned what they wish to give for the clergyman, and the amount is included on his bill. The following statement of an undertaker indicates the practice:

If people do not belong to a church we tell them they should pay the minister something. Often the pastor refuses to accept a fee. If we ask, "How much do you wish to give?"—some say \$5, some \$10, or perhaps even \$15 or \$25. The last figure is offered rather seldom, however. We feel people should pay the minister something for his service. Once in a while we meet opposition. Some people think the pastor should do this work for nothing even though they have no church connection, and they kick because there is a fee on the bill. On such cases we usually bear down a little more.

We asked the ministers to state to what extent they receive fees in this manner when called upon by undertakers to take charge of funerals. Three-fourths have accepted fees from this source, there being 17.5 per cent who receive them in this way in all or most cases, 24 p.c. in some cases, 33 p.c. in few, and 25.5 p.c. in none.

Some pastors seem to resent the practice on the ground that it makes the minister appear mercenary. One states, "The undertaker is instructed that I will not receive such fees." A second says, "This has happened but it was not my will." Others charge that undertakers sometimes fail to turn over the fee to the minister and they are of the opinion that, in order to avoid abuse, perquisites should not be given in this manner. We quote from a pastor on the latter point:

To show the ethics of some of these undertakers, they will put \$10 on the bill for the pastor and in turn will give him \$5. I have absolute proof of that. I tripped up one undertaker on this and told him that if I heard of it again I would expose him publicly. It is my personal conviction that in all

cases where people want to give the pastor a perquisite, they should give it to the pastor in person rather than through the undertaker. This destroys opportunities for abuse.

The possibilities for the minister to do a big business in funerals by working with undertakers are also set forth by one of the clergy.

There are about eighteen undertakers in this community. When I first came here they all made a mad scramble to give me a funeral so that I would throw business their way. I informed them I would prefer to have people call me rather than get funerals in any other way. Thus I do not get much business except through my church and through people who know me. If I wanted to give a little business to undertakers I could have funerals every day. We live in a community where there are a lot of old folks and there is a high death rate. It is not difficult to see how undertakers would like to put the preacher under obligation to them. I thoroughly disapprove of the church having an official undertaker, just as the church does not have an official doctor or lawyer or merchant. People should be left to use their own discretion.

Other ministers, however, have apparently had fine relations with undertakers, and the fact that three-fourths of the clergymen received perquisites through their intermediation seems to show that the practice is rather generally approved by them.

A third function for which fees are presented to ministers is that of conducting baptismal services. It is evident from Table IX that the practice of giving fees for baptisms is not as prevalent as it is for weddings and funerals. It may be added that, as with funerals, the custom of giving fees is far more common among the Lutherans than among other groups.

Table X gives the percentage of ministers accepting baptismal perquisites when offered. The relative prevalence of the practice in regard to weddings, funerals, and baptisms is quickly seen from the last column, which shows that, in this order, the frequency of refusal to accept fees is 2.2 per cent, 14 p.c., and 38 p.c. De-

nominal differences are again conspicuous. Of all the men, some 28 p.c. accept all or most of these baptismal fees, but the percentages for the several seminary groups are Gettysburg 53, Mt. Airy 47, Biblical Seminary 50, Drew 34, Berkeley 30, Auburn 21, Yale 16, Hartford 15, Bangor 8, and Colgate-Rochester 3.

A fourth service rendered by the clergy for which perquisites are given is that of administering private communion to sick and shut-in persons. It is only in the Lutheran and Episcopal churches, however, that this custom of giving private communion prevails in any degree, and about half of the clergy of these groups state that honorariums for this service are offered only rarely. Furthermore, only about half of those offered are accepted.

Honorariums are sometimes presented for conducting confirmation or church membership classes. It is only in the Lutheran Church, however, that the practice is sufficiently prevalent to be worthy of mention, about half the men of this group receiving the offer always or usually, and only about a fifth always refusing it.

The giving of perquisites for sermons, lectures, talks, or addresses outside the congregation may seem of little relevance to this discussion, but facts are included for whatever interest they may have. As seen in Tables IX and X, only 7.4 per cent signify that perquisites are never presented to them, and about nine-tenths accept them at least sometimes. In this case the Lutheran group reverses its position and is the one to accept fees least frequently, bearing out the general tendency of this denomination, already noted, to concern itself more exclusively with ecclesiastical interests.

WHY FEES ARE ACCEPTED MORE FREQUENTLY FOR SOME FUNCTIONS THAN FOR OTHERS

It has been pointed out that there is considerable diversity in the practice of accepting fees for various ministerial functions. While some ministers prefer not to receive honorariums in con-

nection with funerals, baptisms, confirmations, and private communion services, almost none seem hesitant about accepting marriage fees. This difference is based upon the fact that the former are religious services, whereas in the case of marriage a civil as well as religious service is involved. The marriage fee is defended also on the basis of custom. The following are typical comments:

I do not approve of perquisites for any religious service which a minister renders, but in the case of weddings, it is so firmly established by custom that I accept them. If the parties are of limited means I sometimes present the fee as a gift to the bride. The acceptance of fees for baptisms and funerals is, in my mind, a most callous and unchristian practice.

Perquisites are not in the same class as discounts. They are wrong. A gift from the Holy Ghost cannot be purchased. Your whole attitude is changed if you receive a fee, but in marriage you are acting in a civil as well as religious capacity. You are therefore justified in accepting an honorarium for a wedding. Marriage is not a sacrament.

The fact that "marriage is not compulsory" while "funerals and baptisms are assumed to be compulsory" is given as a second reason for accepting fees for weddings and refusing them for funerals and baptisms. Other arguments are of this sort:

I often refuse funeral fees where I know the family. Four times out of five I turn back the baptismal fee. I never return a wedding fee. The wedding perquisite comes from the savings of a person. The funeral honorarium comes in addition to other expenses along with a sadness. The baptismal perquisite comes right after the expense of bringing into the world a new baby.

There ought not to be any question about wedding fees. My feeling is that a person who can afford to get married can likewise afford to pay an honorarium, and he ought to be able to do it with decency.

Ministers also object to funeral fees for the reason that acceptance tends to obscure their desire to render service. One pastor

states, "I found that accepting funeral perquisites was bad in my own life because I began to place a value on deaths." Another says, "Funeral fees I do not accept. It gives me a wrong feeling to do so. If I do not accept, the thought of this does not come into my mind. Then I can give myself whole-souled to the service."

The fact that superstition seems to have grown up around the baptismal fee is offered by some ministers as a reason for declining all perquisites for that function. Many of the clergy testified that "people feel the baptism is not valid unless there is payment." A professor, who formerly was in the pastorate, says:

There is a good deal of superstition in connection with baptism, especially on the part of people who come from Russia and the Baltic provinces. I had to educate people in this matter. The baptism was usually conducted in the home, and there was a party following it. Immediately following the baptism they always would drop a coin in the water, such as a quarter, a half dollar or a silver dollar. There was a pagan superstition connected with this coin. It had something to do with keeping the devil away from the child.

Some of the clergy likewise refuse to accept fees for private communion, as well as for communion in the church, for the same reason. One pastor comments:

I receive no perquisites for private communion. I know some churches in which it is the practice for people to put a gift on the plate for the minister at the communion service in the church. It is an offence to me. People get the idea that they are buying forgiveness of sins.

WHY FEES ARE ACCEPTED MORE FREQUENTLY FROM NON-MEMBERS THAN FROM MEMBERS

Fees are accepted more generally from persons outside the church than from members. The clergy tend to justify this difference in practice on the ground that the person not connected with the church gives the honorarium as "a contribution for

service rendered." Some feel that the minister has no responsibility for unchurched people:

I don't hesitate to accept a fee for funerals of non-members. These people have no claim on my time. But they are usually the ones who are not anxious to make a gift.

People who don't pay anything to the church are always criticizing it and demand the most in case of special services, such as funerals. They should pay a fee. People would like the church more if they had to pay something for it.

Experience has taught me that it would be a good thing to charge fees of non-members, as they are the hardest to satisfy and demand the most, particularly at funerals.

I believe non-members should pay. There should be stated fees for those not members, such as \$5 for a wedding and \$5 for a funeral, plus expenses. When people come demanding your services, then they would know exactly what your time is worth. The undertaker gets his fee; the doctor gets his; if there is a will, the lawyer gets his fee; and along comes the preacher, trained in one particular art, and he is just a door mat for all the other professions. If there was a stated fee it would add more dignity to the profession. The fee should go to the preacher and not to the church.

USE OF FEES

Three-fourths of the clergy employ fees for personal or family matters, while about a fifth give them over to the church treasury. However, the phrase, "personal or family use," is sometimes qualified by statements indicating that fees are appropriated for technical equipment, such as books.

Some of the clergy also employ honorariums for different purposes, depending upon the function for which they were given. Perquisites received for weddings are, in most cases, used by the pastor or they are given to his wife. Those presented for other ministerial services are appropriated in various ways. The following comment is illustrative:

1. Funeral perquisites of families of the church are used in

missionary activities of the church as a memorial of the deceased.

2. Funeral perquisites of families not of the church are used for books and other technical equipment.

3. All baptismal perquisites are put into the church current expense treasury.

A further distinction is often made in the use of fees given by members and by non-members. One pastor states:

I consider perquisites offered by church members as a gift to the minister for his services, while fees presented by non-members are for the offices of the church and therefore rightly should be placed in the church treasury.

Some ministers claim they use fees for the church, but at the same time admit that no record is kept of the amount received nor of what is spent. One pastor says, however:

I find it very beneficial to have a "special benevolence" account for all funeral monies and if givers will not take it back I tell them I will use the remuneration for some charity. I keep an account of this.

It is evident that the majority of ministers employ gratuities for personal purposes.

SIZE AND AMOUNT OF FEES

With reference to the size of honorariums presented, the interviews reveal considerable variation. There is some testimony that the majority are \$5 or under, while only an occasional fee reaches the \$10 mark. One pastor says, "The usual amount is from \$3 to \$5. Once in a while it is \$10." Another reports, "I sometimes get \$1, sometimes \$2, and occasionally \$5."

Other comments place the amount at a higher figure—\$10, \$20, \$50, \$75, and even \$100 are mentioned. The following is reported by one pastor: "I was talking to a man the other day who received \$75 for a funeral. The family appreciated that he had rendered an

unusual service to them. He had gained a hold on one member of the family, whom no one else had been able to grasp." Another, who at one time was in charge of a wealthy New York City church, states that it was not unusual to receive \$100 for a wedding and that "this was entirely in keeping with other expenses, since hundreds of dollars were often spent for flowers."

On the whole, it appears that most perquisites presented to ministers range from \$5 to \$10.

Very scant data could be secured as to the total amount of perquisites received by ministers for the period of a year. It was apparent, however, that the sum may reach several hundred dollars in the case of certain ministers and in rare instances a pastor may receive more in fees than he does from his salary. Concerning the validity of this last statement, we quote the following comments:

Our oldest church in New York is . . . Twenty years ago the pastor told me he received more in fees in a year than he did from his salary.

I started a mission church in the Bronx, N. Y., twenty-five years ago. At that time my salary was \$100 per month and many months my perquisites amounted to more than the salary.

HOW MINISTERS FEEL ABOUT FEES

A good deal of space has been used in setting forth the prevalence of practices relating to fees, and from these facts, when viewed in proper historical perspective, inferences may be drawn regarding the possibility or desirability of reducing the present chaos to some semblance of regularity and order. Ethical implications, however, depend not on practice merely, but also on opinions offered in defense of practice when any of its features are called into question. Our discussion of fees, therefore, will not be complete without the assembly of a few quotations representative of current thought and feeling.

As in previous instances, it is convenient to divide these judgments into three groups, the pros, the cons, and the neutrals.

Those who are favorable to the receipt of honorariums state that convention rather than ethics is involved. They say further that the expense connected with the special functions the minister performs is sufficient justification for the acceptance of perquisites. Illustrative comments follow:

If I have a funeral tomorrow, it takes oil to drive this car,⁴ and I have to wear good clothes. If I have a wedding I have to give them a book and wear good clothes. I haven't any ethics about fees. They are only a passing incident. I don't care whether they are \$2, \$5, or \$50. They have been all of those amounts. Fees are just a convention of the time. None give very much, so it doesn't make much difference.

This problem never troubled me one way or the other. Most people seem to have ways of getting discounts on something, so I have usually accepted perquisites and discounts when offered. My only objection is to a parasitic attitude, trying for favors and therefore continuing the old thought that there are three sexes—men, women, and ministers.

I feel that strangers who are able to pay, either for funerals or marriages, ought to be allowed to do so. It is generous enough to allow them to place their own price upon a man's time, training, and service. I have not found any who are unduly liberal about it.

Some ministers feel rather resentful toward any investigation of the giving of perquisites and state that, owing to the smallness of ministerial salaries, there should be no concern about the little extra amount received in fees. Others, who likewise seem to resent the inquiry, have attempted to return fees in the past, but apparently have been disillusioned in the matter. Cases in point are given herewith:

With the small salaries the ministers are getting, there should be no bandying about the few dollars a pastor receives

⁴The car referred to was a Packard.

for services rendered. It is nobody's business if the people want him to have it and give it willingly.

To be honest, I fear I am becoming somewhat "hard-boiled" in these things. The world will take away what little I have—sell me stocks and bonds which are worthless. If a bishop preaches an anniversary sermon, he sends a bill for \$50. No one is giving me something if he does not want to. I have tried to refuse fees, etc., and have been branded a "sap" and advised, even by my bishop, to "take what I can get." Unethical? Perhaps it's "horse sense."

Ministers justify the perquisite system further on the ground that the pastor must spend considerable money on work which is not directly connected with his pastorate. We quote at length from a pastor concerning this view:

There are many things a pastor does for parishioners outside the scope of pastoral work which cost him something. Often he receives no remuneration for this service. An example is that of juvenile court work. I am chairman of Boys' Work in the Synod. I have had numerous calls from people asking me to go to court and try to influence the judgment. People have even asked me to attempt to get boys out of the reformatory on parole. I have spent hours of time, using up nervous energy, gasoline, etc., in that work. I am likewise sponsor of the Boys' Camp in our conference. About \$300 of my money has been invested in that work which never will be returned. There are also many organizations within the community with which one wishes to keep in contact just for the sake of his people, all of which involve luncheon fees, dues, and travelling expense. How can one do all this on the salary he receives and yet properly represent his congregation? It is only through the money that comes in from perquisites that one is able to meet this additional outlay.

Again, it is stated by this group that the giving of honorariums by those served adds to "their appreciation of the service, and also to their self-respect." For some a fee is a gift, not a payment:

I have never accepted a perquisite with the expression that

it is in payment for service. I am a servant of the church and the church is eager to serve in every case of need, but I like to think of the honorarium as a gift and not as a wage. These perquisites are given as gifts and I see no reason why they should not be accepted as such just the same as at Christmas time. If I accept them as pay I had better be careful to see that they are included when filling out my income tax blank.⁵

When questioned as to the attitude of the public toward the acceptance of fees, this group indicated the belief that people in general have no objection to the practice. Typical statements of their view follow:

I think it is pure imagination that accepting fees and discounts hurts the minister in the eyes of the public. It does not hurt the work of the church a particle. There may be some criticism on the part of people who are entirely out of touch with the church, but they are not in sympathy with the church and are just looking for something to talk about. It does not bother people who are favorable to the church.

As a matter of fact the average salary of ministers is about \$1500 or \$1600, or perhaps it is only \$1200. I think that is generally known on the part of the public. Some men are getting a high salary, but even then, in comparison with what such men might get in business, it is very small. I do not believe the public thinks the minister is overpaid and I think they would not deny him the right to a reasonable living.

This last statement illustrates also the most prevalent argument for the acceptance of perquisites, *viz.*, that they are necessary for the maintenance of adequate standards of living.

A second group of clergymen, whom we may call the neutral or mixed or uncertain group, while not wholly in accord with the practice, is willing to receive gratuities because of certain other

⁵In view of the above statement, it is significant that an Internal Revenue collector in New Haven, Conn., stated that fees should be included on the income tax returns.

factors involved. These various factors are illustrated in the following comments:

Since salaries are not high, I accept all fees and discounts which my conscience permits. I do not take money from poor families. (Please note that in our town doctor, dentist, grocer, and undertaker all get their bills paid when incurred by a town charge, but the clergyman, never.)

It is often humiliating and embarrassing to accept fees. But people love to share their joy with the pastor, and I have frequently been told, when declining fees, that this was the idea of the persons making the gift.

I do not expect, ask, nor really want most perquisites for funerals, except where they involve travel by car or train. But if offered in good faith, I take them, knowing that it will give pleasure or satisfaction to have them accepted.

Should ministers accept marriage or funeral fees? I do not think they should as a rule. There may come times, however, when they must accept or offend the person making the offer. At such times they ought to accept the fee and turn the money into the church. I resent personally the whole idea of fees.

I started out *never* to accept anything for a funeral from members of my own church. I have found occasions when the family seems embarrassed by my refusal—particularly in this community where the undertakers usually arrange for a check for the pastor. If after I attempt to return the honorarium the family seems hurt, I feel it is often best not to insist.

An additional factor to take into account is that of the financial status of the people. Some persons are in position to present a gift to the pastor, while others are not. These ministers state that one cannot lay down a general principle regarding the matter of fees. Their views are given below:

If I do a service for a well-to-do family and this family wants to make a gift in recompense, I take it. If they are

not able, I do not take it. I think I turn back more than I accept. There is no principle to be applied.

I have come to think a wedding usually worth a fee. In connection with a funeral one may have a good chance of helping people by returning their fee. Each case is judged on its merits by the best Christian judgment I can exercise.

There is also the feeling of persons who consider the service lacks validity if no financial contribution has been connected with it.

I have a conflict regarding the ethics of accepting fees for funerals of members of my own church. I have discovered that if you give your service and there is no payment, the person thinks there is no value. Likewise, in the case of one baptism, a fellow felt it was not valid because he did not pay for it. People also seem to feel in the giving of fees that some of their self-respect is bound up with it. They think that if they do not give an honorarium they are classed with the poor. I had a scrub woman who gave me \$10 for a funeral. I tried to refuse, but she said she wanted to pay her bills, and that if I did not take it she would never come into my church again. I had to accept the fee in order to maintain her self-respect.

A final factor to be considered, say members of this second group, is that some Lutheran churches expect the pastor to receive fees as a part of his salary. One reports that "a minister received a call to go from . . . to It was included in the call that the church council would pay \$400 per year and the pastor could expect \$1000 per year from perquisites." Another, in describing his present situation, says, "My church council tells me to accept fees because my salary is below the minimum standard set by synod."

So much for the pros and the middle group. A third group of men are definitely against the practice of receiving perquisites. Representative views follow:

I think the church would have a stronger message if all fees were done away. The whole thing makes the preacher

uncomfortable. There must then be something wrong with it. If it gives uneasiness, there must be something wrong at the root. The judgment is made that we are self-seekers and are a gilt-edge crowd out for all we can get. Accepting fees might add a little fuel to the fire.

I would prefer that fees be not offered. The performance of these various functions by the minister should be included without any extra remuneration in the service he renders the church. Fees cheapen marriage. To accept them makes it appear as though the minister is commercializing his services and it might affect the church adversely. People may feel that the church is sort of a money-grabbing institution and is not so much interested in serving as in getting.

This group also states on the positive side that when fees have been refused, a more favorable response has been received from the persons concerned. One says, "I have received many folks into the church after funerals and I think my refusing perquisites has helped." Another comments, "If you do not accept honorariums, the attitude of the members is better and they are more appreciative of your work. They see you are here to give service and are not out just for the money."

Again, the clergy protest against the perquisite system because of the effect upon the minister and the ministerial profession. They feel it lowers the minister's self-respect and that it is degrading to the ministry as a whole.

I hate the whole system of ministerial fees. It seems to me like a tip system, and puts the ministry on a level with waiters and porters. If fees are to be received they should be fixed and definite amounts.

A perquisite, in my judgment, is an ethical nuisance; often more embarrassing in the declination than in the acceptance. It smacks too much of that baneful American practice which might be called "dollar religion"—the theory that a religious obligation is ended by money payment. I resent the implication that the services of the church can be "bought"

in any sense of the term, or that a minister "sells" his services.

Churches have the attitude that the pastor is a hired worker and if you have paid him for his service your obligation to him and to the church is fulfilled.

Some of those who are opposed to fees object to them for the reason that people often present an honorarium even though they are themselves in need. They do so because it is the custom.

FACTS AND ISSUES

The clergymen who have been consulted in this investigation are almost equally divided in their judgment as to the desirability of eliminating all fees. The facts are of sufficient interest to warrant giving them fully in Table XI. Strangely enough, it is the Lutheran group, which is most generally in the habit of receiving fees, that shows the strongest tendency to wish them removed altogether. Perhaps the most important fact, however, is that about 41 per cent do wish to retain them.

The facts as to the prevalence of fees can best be reviewed by glancing at Tables IX and X. In all or most instances fees are accepted for weddings by some 90 per cent of the clergy, for funerals by some 50 p.c., for baptisms by about 28 p.c. and for lectures, sermons and addresses by about 42 p.c. Fewer fees are accepted from members than from non-members. There is no evidence that the practice is increasing or decreasing.

The reasons given in support of the various practices may well be brought together for the light they throw on the state of the Protestant mind in regard to this matter. The wide distinction between weddings and other services is justified on the following grounds: These latter occasions are assumed to be compulsory; the funeral honorarium comes in addition to other expenses along with a sadness; the baptismal fee accompanies the expense of bringing a child into the world; fees tend to obscure the desire to render service; superstition becomes associated with the giving

of fees for baptism and private communion. Wedding perquisites are justified, however, on the ground that a civil act is involved as well as a religious ceremony; that marriage is not compulsory; that the wedding fee comes from the savings of a person; and that people who can afford to get married should be able to pay a fee.

The tendency to accept fees from the unchurched more generally than from church members is justified on the basis that the unchurched give the honorariums as a payment for service rendered; that the minister has no responsibility for the unchurched; and that these persons are critical of the church and might think more of it if they made a contribution. Some propose that a charge should be made of non-members for the reason that all other professional men receive a fee for comparable service, and that this would add dignity to the profession.

With regard to the perquisite system as a whole, members of the group in favor of it justify the practice on these grounds: that convention rather than ethics is involved; that the expense connected with special functions is sufficient reason for acceptance; that due to the smallness of ministerial salaries, there should be no criticism of ministers for receiving fees; that since the pastor does extra-parish work and must represent the congregation before various community organizations, involving expense for which he is not reimbursed, the income from perquisites is necessary to offset this additional outlay; that when people give fees it adds to their appreciation of the service and also to their self-respect; that since people present honorariums as gifts, they should be accepted as such; that the public has no objection to the practice; and finally that perquisites are necessary for the maintenance of an adequate standard of living.

A second group, although not fully in accord with the practice, is willing to receive gratuities because of other factors involved. This group states that low salaries and the expense in connection with ministerial functions are often determining elements; that people receive joy from making a gift; that refusing or returning

a perquisite may cause offence or injury to the person making the offer; that no general principle can be laid down, because some people are in position to give a fee, even though others are not; that the pride and self-respect of persons must be considered; and finally that some churches regard honorariums as a part of the salary.

A third group is definitely committed against the practice. The clergy in this group are of the opinion that the effectiveness of the church is lessened through acceptance of fees, since this encourages the public to believe the minister is mercenary; that where perquisites have been refused the persons concerned have given a more favorable response; that receiving honorariums makes the pastor less critical of the evils among his people; that the practice lowers the minister's self-respect and the standing of the whole profession; that persons not financially able are giving perquisites; and finally that people assume they are paying in full for service received and thus have no further responsibility toward the church.

To what extent the 41 per cent who wish the practice continued are influenced by the fact that the returns from fees are devoted to personal uses is not known, but it is true that a majority do thus dispose of money received in this way. Many are expected to do so. As long as the salary situation remains in its present unsatisfactory state, this seems rather inevitable. Nevertheless, the arguments against the practice cannot be entirely dismissed, especially by those whose salaries are otherwise reasonably adequate. An accounting of fees is rendered by few, even when they are used for church purposes. No one knows, perhaps not even the ministers themselves, just how much money is involved. It is not surprising that so many would like to abandon the practice altogether.

There is no agreement as to the possibility of eliminating fees. Table XI gives the opinions of the graduates of the ten seminaries on this point. Again it is the very ones who are most accustomed

TABLE XI

JUDGMENT OF MINISTERS OF DESIRABILITY AND
POSSIBILITY OF GETTING RID OF ALL PERQUISITES
(FEES, HONORARIUMS, GRATUITIES)

	Would it be desirable to get rid of all perquisites, if it were possible to do so?			Could such perquisites be eliminated?		
	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW
Bangor (Cong.).....	50	49	1	47	51	1
Hartford (Cong.).....	56	42	2	46	52	2
Yale (Cong.).....	56	44	..	46	54	..
Gettysburg (Luth.).....	61	39	..	61	39	..
Mt. Airy (Luth.).....	78	20	1	70	29	1
Auburn (Presby.).....	62	38	..	55	45	..
Berkeley (Epis.).....	59	41	..	67	33	..
Colg.-Roch. (Bapt.)....	58	40	2	50	45	6
Drew (Meth.).....	52	48	..	52	45	3
Bib. Sem. (Inter-denom.)	53	47	..	56	34	9
Average.....	58.5	40.8	.6	55.0	42.7	2.2

Read table as follows: Of the Congregational ministers, graduates of Bangor, residing in New England, New York and New Jersey, who check their judgment on the desirability and possibility of getting rid of perquisites, 50 per cent say it would be desirable, 49 p.c. say it would not be desirable, and 1 p.c. say they do not know whether or not it would be desirable; 47 p.c. say perquisites could be eliminated, 51 p.c. say they could not be eliminated, and 1 p.c. say they do not know whether perquisites could be eliminated. Similarly read figures for each seminary.

to the practice who most frequently believe it could be done away with. To do so, however, would require both a greater degree of co-operation among ministers than is now found and an increase in the salary scale. A few state that a pastor could get rid of fees within his own congregation by educating his people. The large group (43 per cent) who believe perquisites could not

be eliminated refer to the lack of Protestant co-operation or the influence of the Roman Catholic practice. They hold that mere legislation cannot change so deeply rooted a custom.

Notwithstanding all argument to the contrary, however, a few ministers do not accept honorariums. Says one of these:

I do not accept any fees. If some one wants to send in money as a gift, it is put in the relief fund for care of the poor. If some one hands me a fee, I hand it back and tell him to send it to the church if he wants to. Our aim is to educate people to pay an adequate salary. There is no charge for use of the church for weddings, funerals, or for any purpose.

No criticism of the historic practice is implied when the question is raised as to its pertinence to modern conditions. Is it a hangover which, if continued, makes of the clergy a privileged class? There is much discussion today of the social values involved in the way physicians are paid for their services. It would be strange if the ministry were found to be lagging behind, burdened with an outgrown custom which under new conditions has lost its function. The giving up of privilege is sometimes preached from the pulpit as necessary for peaceful transition to a more just social order. Some clergymen seem to believe that there is an opportunity for such renunciation within their own ranks.

Virtuous as such renunciation might be, it is regarded by some as a rather futile gesture unless accompanied by provision for a living wage. But others hold that the latter cannot come without the definite abandonment of the fee system. There may be a problem in personal courage at this point, and one of wise strategy, and some would claim that no matter what the personal motives of the minister may be, the clarification of the financial relation of pastor and people is clearly a problem of social ethics and should be somehow resolved in any worthwhile professional code.

Can the several Protestant groups, with their varied historical backgrounds and types of training, ever get together on this prob-

lem? The lack of uniformity among those of any one denomination suggests that other factors than the inertia of custom are at work to determine practice. An open-minded appraisal of facts and motives might well lead us out of the present dilemma.

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PART TWO

INTERPRETATIONS AND PROBLEMS

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Chapter VIII

THE MAJOR ISSUES

It has not been the intention of this book to manufacture ethical issues where none exist, or to develop fine-spun theories of what is right and wrong and "show up" the ministry as failing to conform to these arbitrary standards. What we have done is to report the practices and opinions of a large number of clergymen representative of the Protestant ministry of the Northeast. Some of these practices speak for themselves as failing to reach commonly accepted ideals. Of these and of others less obviously out of line with ethical standards the ministers themselves have a good deal to say. We have reported their judgments for what they may be worth. They represent the result of much thought and experience, as well as the present base line from which the ministry will need to start if it is to become an ethically conscious profession.

Reference to pages 35-38, 52-54, 67-68, 95-97, 120-122, 138-141, 160-165, on which the several chapters are summarized, will verify the conclusion that the ethical dilemmas in which the ministry is involved are of three major types: those arising from conflicts between conscience and economic necessity; those arising from conflicts between narrower and broader loyalties; and those arising from conflicts between fixed standards, customs, or rules and the discovered needs of immediate situations.

THE DILEMMAS OF INSECURITY

The ministry is not the only professional group in which insecurity acts as an incubus upon ideals. Writing in *Harpers Magazine* for November, 1935, Harold J. Laski shows how economic

pressure influences the conduct of lawyers and doctors in such a way as to jeopardize the common welfare. Lawyers among themselves and doctors among themselves, and both against the needs of the consumers of their services, are in a competitive system which demands of each man, if he would succeed, that is, make good financially, the sort of behavior that the professional codes of these groups prohibit.

Teachers and journalists, likewise, have felt the heavy hand of privileged interests and have adapted their work accordingly. Disinterested service is made dangerous or impossible in a society in which the predominant motive is the making of profit for private persons.

Laski might well have included an extensive analysis of the ministry to the same effect. An extreme statement of the situation appears in a letter to *The Christian Century* from R. L. Jackson:

Sir: Dining recently with one of the signers of the manifesto issued by the co-operating staff of the world-service agencies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I took the liberty of inquiring of him how the Methodist ministers could preach the contents of this document and at the same time raise the money required of them to meet the demands of the church. He frankly said, "I do not know." A colored brother once defined the status quo as "a devil of a fix." That seems to be where the socially minded minister of today finds himself. He must raise money, much money, and to whom must he go for the bulk of it, but to monied beneficiaries of the existing social order who are perfectly satisfied with it? Whomever else he falls out with, he must not fall out with them. Dispensing this document to his congregation from Sunday to Sunday, even in homeopathic doses, he will soon find himself *persona non grata* with them. Anything approaching allopathic doses means dismissal at their hands.

Here is the pathetic irony of the status of a minister. He serves an institution whose supreme head, the Christ, demands of him the preaching of a gospel of social justice, but in order to keep this institution variously and voluminally

functioning, he must look to the champions of an order of social injustice for the needed wherewithal. In doing the work of the Lord, he must dance attendance on the servants of mammon and the more devoted his attendance, the more money he can count on. This is the "fix" your minister with a social conscience is in.

No doubt good can be done with the money which the beneficiaries of a predatory capitalism give, but we deceive ourselves if we think that that is the way the kingdom of God comes or the way God intended it to come. As clergy and laity, we have never caught the full significance of Christ's temptation in the wilderness. The devil did not tempt Christ to renounce his Messianic claim and rôle. He tempted him to believe that he could be the Messiah and at the same time enjoy the favor and friendship of those who were answerable for the social and ecclesiastical injustice and tyranny of his day. Similarly, we are tempted of the devil to believe that we can be the representatives of Christ and as such administer the benefactions of men who stand for a social order that is the antithesis of Christianity.

The terrible fact about many of us is that we are trying to do the work of God in the devil's and not in Christ's way. We haven't sufficient faith in God to make the clean break with the servants of mammon which he made.¹

In this connection it might be well to recall to mind the activities of the Conference of Methodist Laymen. How much good (or evil) these gentlemen accomplished would be hard to estimate. One of the leaders of this movement, Mr. William Helm, is quoted in *The Christian Century*² as saying that the Conference was "more than satisfied" with the results. This satisfaction was apparently based on Mr. Helm's judgment that radicals on the boards are being replaced by those more sympathetic with the views of the laymen of the Conference.

It would seem desirable to distinguish between dilemmas arising from the need of eking out one's salary by resort to fees or dis-

¹*Christian Century*, XLVIII, January 28, 1931, p. 143. Used by permission.

²*Ibid.*, LIII, December 23, 1936, p. 1708.

counts, to "stealing sheep," etc., and dilemmas more directly concerned with attitudes toward social issues.

Speaking of the latter first, we find that very few men seem as concerned as Mr. Jackson over the apparent control of the Christian message by anti-Christian forces. While this may be a serious problem for the vitality of Christianity, it does not often appear to the individual minister as a dilemma. Not much is said in the pulpit to arouse the wrath of the capitalistically minded, so that few men feel any direct pressure. Most of those who do try to work out the social implications of the Gospel, in action or even in speech, find themselves in opposition to influences which control their positions. Naturally little or nothing is done by pastors to discipline members who violate standards of social ethics.

One way out of this dilemma is to make such general provision for salaries as will release a minister from dependence on his local congregation, or from any individual member of it. For those who have given hostages to fortune, this would seem to be the only way. Whether it is likely to come to pass is another matter. Hence the dilemma of the young minister whose prophetic call to challenge injustice in high places is drowned out by the still small voice of the god of things as they are, who pointedly asks who is to support the man's wife and children if he loses his job.

But must a minister take sides? This may be a most significant query. It often is only a back door through which one can slip to safety. It would seem as though the moral integrity of Protestantism depended on a satisfactory solution of this problem of how basic social issues are to be handled by ministers.

Turning to the general problem of inadequate income, we find all sorts of practices going on which are not approved but are condoned as necessary evils—a hazardous position for any minister to take who wants his conduct to bear out his preaching. Just as insecurity is preventing the lawyer, the doctor, the school teacher, the journalist, and men in other professions from achieving their

ethical ideal, the minister likewise seems unable to raise his practice to a desirable ethical level because of this situation. Of course the effect upon certain practices may not seem very serious. Probably neither the church nor society, for example, suffers much because of the minister's inability to exercise discipline upon offending members. It may even be beneficial that discipline is no longer possible.

Discounts are accepted, when offered, by more than half the men, and about a fourth request them sometimes. These are justified on the ground that salaries are inadequate. So with clergy fares, which nearly all ministers use, even for personal travel, either as a matter of course, without question, or because they feel they are needed to compensate for low salaries. The fee situation is similar. An old custom of paying the minister by special gifts is continued into a situation where it is an anachronism. Although large numbers would like to eliminate fees, they feel they cannot afford to.

Many clergy fail to have a clear conscience about such privileges. They point out various evils. In connection with special privileges they state that the practice is undemocratic in that a subsidy is granted to a special class; that it lowers the minister's self-respect; and that the pastor finds it difficult to speak critically to the man who has been kind to him. With regard to perquisites, the ministers believe (they say the same with regard to privileges) the practice conveys to the non-church world, and to some members of the church, the impression that clergymen are in the profession for economic gain. It is further intimated that the practice influences some clergy to enter into collusion with the undertaker and that the desire for the perquisite causes pastors to marry all persons who apply regardless of their fitness for the relationship.

Methods of supporting the local church are recognized by many ministers as less than ideal. But they are customary and nothing can be done about them. Pastors cannot afford to oppose pro-

cedures on which their own salaries depend. The moral problem with regard to some methods of church finance (other than gambling) may not seem acute. Nevertheless some pastors insist that it is wrong for the church to compete with legitimate business by conducting dinners, sales, etc. These men also believe true Christians will support the church willingly and adequately on a freewill offering basis when properly trained. At any rate, it seems unfortunate that for economic reasons ministers should be prevented from exercising leadership in placing church finance on the stewardship level.

In getting new members, effects on other churches often seem less important than the success of one's own institution. Nor can the minister afford to neglect his church in order to give service to community activities, which net nothing in the way of reputation or membership. He must build up his congregation, and, of course, many men feel that this is the best way to serve the community.

Harm is done many persons because some pastors hesitate to release them to churches in the community to which they have moved. Sometimes the children unite with the community church while the parents maintain membership in the former church, thus dividing the family interest. In other cases, membership is retained in the old church but, because of distance, attendance becomes irregular, and finally the person is lost to the church altogether. It might seem that the minister as a professional man should place the interests of the people above the interests of his local church and of himself. Yet since his own security is involved, his action can be understood.

When ministers confine their efforts largely to their own congregations, many people in the various institutions of the community are overlooked and receive no pastoral attention. But a ministry which gives all its time to local congregational work will probably never discover community needs. The work of the minister is much like that of the doctor and lawyer in this con-

nection. The doctor is obligated not only to treat individual patients, but also to share in movements for the improvement of general public health and to care for people unable to afford a physician. The lawyer likewise has a responsibility to serve not merely clients who can pay for his services, but also indigent prisoners if appointed by the court. He has the additional responsibility in the interest of justice to use his influence in improvement of the law. But lawyer, physician and minister have the common failure of sometimes neglecting to fulfil their duty. One reason for this failure on the part of the minister is that his own livelihood is dependent upon success within the local congregation, and to this narrow field of service he therefore devotes almost the whole of his attention.

Enough has been said to indicate that the inadequacy of the clergyman's income has a detrimental effect upon his practice and that his insecurity may work great harm to society. Like the members of other professional groups, the minister appears, to a considerable extent, to be at the mercy of the present economic order. The problem seems vital enough to demand that something be done about it. But what? Should steps be taken to provide a more adequate income for the clergy and so to remove their present insecurity? This can be urged, not in the selfish interests of the profession, but for the welfare of society. It is claimed by some that the clergy will not be able to apply religion to the social order in the most vital way unless they are freed from the necessity of trimming their message in order to maintain themselves. Others hold that ministers should give little concern to material reward and that if they are underpaid they should be willing to make the sacrifice. Yet it is also true "that there must be a decent standard of living if a minister is to have the access to books, the cultural stimulation, and the freedom from financial worries that are necessary to a high level of effective service."³

³May, Mark A., and others, *The Education of American Ministers*, Vol. II, p. 104.

It can be seen at once that part of the trouble lies in the conception of what constitutes a decent standard of living or an adequate salary. While it is doubtless true that pastors are not as well paid as members of other professional groups and that a large number receive less than is sufficient to maintain a family, it would be difficult to draw any exact line between a sufficient and an insufficient income. As incomes rise, demands likewise rise so that it would not be easy to secure anything but a relative judgment as to the salary which would grant ethical freedom. Those with larger salaries seem about as reluctant to give up fees and perquisites as those with smaller salaries. Lacking any objective standard, it becomes a matter of individual conscience whether the desire for fees represents, not an absolute need, but the more or less unconscious operation of acquisitive motives.

Granting for the moment that the solution of the ethical dilemmas growing out of economic need can best be reached by providing economic security, how can this end be achieved?⁴

One of the movements which has become fairly widespread is that of establishing minimum salary schedules. Wide variation exists in the minimum standards proposed by different churches. In some cases these schedules are applied to mission churches only, while in other bodies, the schedule is recommended for all ministers. No attempt is made to enforce the standard, however, in many groups. Where the local congregation has ultimate authority, it has control of the amount of money it shall expend for a minister and the minimum standard in such cases serves only as a moral force. It is true also that many small parishes are unable to meet the standard. Where this condition exists, the setting up of a definite schedule of support has little effect unless means are provided to assist the local church. An example is the Sustentation Fund found in some conferences of the Methodist Church. Where the standard applies to mission churches and funds are provided

⁴For the following discussion of salary adjustments we are indebted to the study made by F. Darcy Bone, already cited.

from a central source, there is more possibility of making the standard effective.

Various other efforts are being made to supplement the income of ministers. One of those most generally practiced is that of granting aid to missions. This policy is followed by many church bodies and no doubt relieves the situation to some extent. Only a partial solution arises from this policy, however, since in some church bodies men in other than mission churches are not given such grants even though they are supported very meagerly. Then, too, the grants thus received do not always raise the minister's income to the level of a decent standard of living. Furthermore, a definite negative influence upon ministerial salaries has arisen from the policy as practiced. Church bodies have made grants to missions which run in direct competition with churches of other religious bodies. The practice has led to a large number of struggling congregations in particular communities, which naturally leads to inadequate support of the clergy in those communities.

Brotherhood Funds constitute a second effort to assist men who have received inadequate support. These funds are to be found in the Methodist Church for the most part. The connectional policy of the church seems especially favorable to the operation of the plan. The clergy with the larger salaries contribute toward the fund on a sliding scale, the receipts being used in some cases for necessitous ministers and in other cases to assist all the clergy whose salaries are below a minimum set by the conference. Consideration may be given to the size of the minister's family, school indebtedness, living costs, and so on.

The pooling of ministerial support, a third movement to adjust the salary situation, seems to be receiving increased attention. This principle has been in operation for a long time in missionary work. The purpose of the plan, as applied to all ministerial salaries in general, is to maintain minimum salary schedules and adequate family allowances.

In the case of ministers, the urge to pool salaries has grown out

of a variety of economic and ethical conditions, such as shifts in population leaving local churches stranded and unable to support a minister, differences in the social-economic status of churches, differences in the number of dependents, the need to be independent of the local congregation if one is to be free in his ethical leadership.

The various plans for pooling salaries of ministers seem to offer the greatest hope for removal of evils arising out of inadequate support. Among the advantages of the plan is the claim that suspicion of the profit motive in the ministry would be eliminated; that a sense of economic security would come to all clergy; that they would be provided with a reasonable support of comfort and decency; that the plan acts automatically to prevent the overchurching of particular areas; and that it would emancipate or partially limit the dependence of the ministry on the local church which would enable the ministry to make their Christian conscience a more potent force.

If pooling ministerial support would bring these claimed benefits and if adequate relief and retirement allowances also accompany the plan, it is clear that most of the difficulties raised in connection with the problem of inadequate support and insecurity might disappear. It would not be necessary to seek discounts and perquisites in order to attain a decent standard of living. The clergy might develop more definite standards in the matter of marriage without the fear of losing a needed fee. The professional problem of transferring members would largely disappear, since, if overchurching is prevented, local churches and ministers would not suffer when their members unite with churches in other communities to which they have moved. Moreover, community service would more likely be properly cared for. If the success of the minister were not wholly dependent upon the financial results within his own congregation, he would feel more at liberty to give time to the meeting of community needs. In addition, the minister would also have more power in raising the

ethical level of church practice. Enjoying more security, he could exert greater influence in placing the finances of the church on a stewardship basis. Finally, what might be the greatest benefit to society at large growing out of the pooling of ministerial support is its probable effect upon the minister's practice regarding social and civic issues. He would feel more freedom in educating his people on the economic and social issues of the day, inasmuch as his own security would not be controlled by the people in his local church. Herein, so it is claimed, lie great possibilities for creating a strong Christian conscience and for making it effective in dealing with injustice in the social order.

We began this discussion of security with the temporary assumption that the way to ethical freedom was through economic security. We close it by questioning this assumption. After all, there are other ways of preventing change than merely to starve its proponents.

THE DILEMMAS OF INDIVIDUALISM

A second major issue of professional ethics confronting ministers is that of narrower *versus* broader loyalties. Reference was made to this problem in several chapters dealing with clerical practices and attitudes. The difficulty seems to be more acute in the ministerial profession than among lawyers and doctors. This may be accounted for by the fact that a feeling of professional solidarity exists within the latter groups in a much greater measure than within the ministerial body. Because of this spirit the legal and medical professions are able to meet some of their difficulties with a united front, but owing to the absence of such feeling among clergymen, individual ministers and denominational groups are often working in opposite directions in the attempt to solve common problems.

Some of the present difficulties facing ministers and churches seem to have been created directly by their failure to work together. Especially is this apparent with regard to professional

relations. Friction arises among ministers and harm is done parishioners because of a competitive spirit prevalent among churches and clergymen. For example, when treating the problem of the minister's insecurity, we discussed difficulties arising in the transfer of members from one church to another within the same city. It was noted that pastors of small churches need the support of all their membership in order to maintain themselves and their church program. The inadequate size of the churches is due in large measure to the lack of co-operation which existed among denominations and within denominations when those churches were established.

The complexity of the situation is the more apparent when we note the number of Protestant denominations in our cities. In cities of one hundred thousand population and upward, there is an average of from twenty to fifty denominations, the number varying according to the size of the city. In Chicago and New York more than one hundred Protestant bodies are at work in each.

Other professional problems grow out of the large number of churches. Where so many are at work there naturally is much overlapping of parish lines. This increases the likelihood of ministers being called on to give service to members of churches other than their own. While this problem does not seem to be a major one in the minds of the clergymen interviewed, yet occasional expressions indicate that friction has arisen on this point. Since making sick calls and conducting funerals leads to the forming of friendships, these services may at times result in the transfer of church membership.

Enough has been said to indicate that the difficulties in professional relationship have largely been created by the competitive spirit among ministers and denominations. Perhaps the fault does not lie so much with individual ministers in overchurched communities as it does with denominational leaders who are probably more largely responsible for the policies of their church bodies.

These men, in order to produce results, have felt the necessity of establishing as many churches as possible. Apparently the desire for results often has overshadowed common sense and the Christian spirit. It is clear that the clergy are not likely to raise their ethical practice to a satisfactory level in these professional relationships under present conditions. It is likewise clear that over-churched conditions will not be altered except as denominational groups work together toward that end. To what extent can such co-operation be expected? Is denominationalism still vital today or is it on the decline?

In the interviews, the clergy stated that there is no longer a marked spirit of denominationalism among the lay people. Douglass⁵ is in agreement when he says that "religious differences are not really what they purport to be" when one notes "that the actual memberships of the more representative city churches are denominationally heterogeneous." He discovered in a sampling of downtown churches that "from 20 to 75 per cent of members received by letter (as the majority were) were found coming from denominations other than the one to which the church belonged, the average being approximately one-third." It is apparent that laymen are rapidly forgetting the differences which at one time were considered of major importance.

It does not follow, however, that denominational divisions are of no consequence today. The organizational machinery of the Protestant Church is still for the most part denominational. Douglass⁶ is of the opinion that "the sharpness of their competition has been greatly mitigated by the passage of time," and yet, because this machinery developed out of earlier differences, he is convinced that their moods are sometimes "keyed to the pitch of conflict" and "much of the earlier spirit survives." He is of the further belief that conflict is almost inevitable as long as denominationalism exists even in its milder forms.

⁵Douglass, H. Paul, *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, p. 12.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 22.

The fact that the work of the church is still largely carried on by denominations means that any attempt for co-operative endeavor must give consideration to these divisions within Protestantism. We therefore come back to the question asked earlier: To what extent can these denominations work together to remove the present cause of certain difficulties in professional relationship, namely, the overchurched condition which leads to small struggling parishes in cities, and the situation in rural communities where churches are unable to support ministers?

The spirit of co-operation that has grown among the denominations within the past quarter century is very encouraging. It seems to offer some possibility of relieving the present confusion in overchurched communities. If this were achieved, a finer professional relationship could exist among ministers. There would not need to be the present strife over transferring members from one church to another, since communities would not be burdened with more churches than they could support. This would apply to rural communities as well as cities.

One should not become too optimistic, however, about reaching this goal at an early date. Certain denominations are still largely outside the comity movement. While individual churches within these groups may practice comity, yet the denomination as such may not countenance it. A few other small bodies are excluded as non-evangelical. Again, according to Douglass, even though denominations may be affiliated with federations and profess the practice of comity, it does not follow that they are equally loyal to it. "Differences between liturgical and non-liturgical churches, between the two theological wings of certain evangelical bodies, between the churches of English-speaking and non-English-speaking antecedents, work out into differences of church extension policy, and yield situations sometimes more and sometimes less pliable under comity handling."⁷ Furthermore, Doctor King, of the Home Missions Council, in his report for 1934-35, says that during the

⁷Douglass, H. Paul, *Church Comity*, p. 11.

past few years there has occurred a "resurgence of denominationalism." The effect of the depression has caused denominations to look after themselves and to show less interest in co-operative projects.⁸

A second area of ministerial experience requiring co-operative action to effect a change is the function of marriage. Clergy often view with alarm the number of divorces in the United States. Church bodies meeting in convention pass resolutions with regard to the divorce situation and some set up standards by which to guide their conduct when divorced persons ask to be remarried. Yet, in spite of this, as noted in Chapter I, the practice of ministers among denominations and within denominations is very divergent. Some marry all divorced persons who apply for remarriage while others will marry none. A third group follow the Biblical standard of remarrying the innocent party in a divorce granted for the causes of adultery or desertion only. Still others marry the innocent party in a divorce received for any cause, and a fifth group follow the practice of marrying those divorced persons who show possibilities of a successful marriage, regardless of whether they were the guilty or innocent party in the divorce received.

In the matter of marriage where divorce is not involved, the practice of the clergy also shows diversity and perhaps to a considerable extent no standards of action whatsoever. More than two-fifths of the ministers studied say the legal requirements are sufficient evidence of fitness. Two-thirds make no effort to interview persons to discover qualifications, and almost none make further investigation. Most ministers indicate their willingness to marry strangers without previous notice. A few men, mostly Episcopalian, officiate at marriages of church members only. Apparently little educational work to prepare young people for marriage has been done.

What possibility is there for remedying the divorce evil when ministers either have no standards regarding marriage or their

⁸King, W. R., Home Missions Council, *Annual Report*, January, 1934-35, pp. 7-8.

practice varies from an extremely conservative to an extremely liberal position? When ministers were asked regarding a solution, it was their opinion that the only hope for change was through the united action of the entire Protestant Church. They stated also that a reform of marriage and divorce laws is needed. Uniform legal standards should take the place of the present widely divergent state laws.

What is being done co-operatively and what possibility is there to secure greater co-operation of the clergy of Protestant churches on this matter?

It was noted in the chapter on Marriage that the Federal Council, through its Committee on Marriage and the Home, issued a statement in April, 1933, concerning the minister's responsibility for the success of the marriage relationship. The statement also urged ministers to give educational preparation for marriage and to hold interviews with persons contemplating marriage, in which, among other things, the sex relationship be adequately discussed and helpful literature provided. It advised against marrying strangers and stated that ministers are responsible for giving later pastoral service through forming classes or clubs of young married people in the church. An enlarged statement, based upon the results of further study, comes from the same source at a later date.⁹ This seems to be about all that has been done by this co-operative body.

As was also indicated in Chapter I, the resolutions and standards set up by denominational bodies differ widely. Some are based upon the conviction that only innocent persons of a divorce granted for the cause of adultery and desertion should be remarried. Others believe there are additional grounds for divorce which are valid and that persons should not be denied the privilege of marrying again. Because many of these convictions are based upon systems of theological dogma, there seems

⁹*Safeguarding Marriages*, by the Committee on Marriage and the Home, Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 1935.

little hope for bringing the groups together on a co-operative basis as far as this problem is concerned. One man says, "How can you expect to bring about any effective co-operation in this matter between an Episcopalian, who insists on a rather literal interpretation of the Scripture, and the Congregationalist who believes divorce is justifiable when persons are incompatible?"

A third area of practice requiring co-operation to bring about a change is that of receiving fees for ministerial service. About half the ministers said a change would be desirable if salaries were adequate. They stated, however, that the only possibility of eliminating the practice would be through co-operation of the entire Protestant ministry. Others felt this co-operation would still be inadequate since the Roman Catholic practice tends to affect the action of Protestants.

What possibility is there of securing the co-operation of the Protestant group in the matter? Probably very little under present salary conditions. Another major barrier is that no agency has the full co-operative support of the principal bodies of the Protestant Church. The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is the agency designed to bring the churches together into a working unit at certain points. Yet the Lutheran Church is for the most part outside of that body¹⁰ and the custom of giving perquisites is more prevalent among Lutherans than perhaps among any other group. Unless the Lutheran bodies should work with other religious groups the possibilities of eliminating the perquisite system are much reduced.

One further area of ministerial practice which requires co-operation to achieve greatest results is the realm of community service. It has been stated heretofore that ministers have failed to give satisfactory service in the community because of economic insecurity. Their salary comes from a particular congregation and their livelihood is dependent largely upon their success in carrying

¹⁰The United Lutheran Church in America is the only Lutheran body having association with the Federal Council, and that is only a consultative relationship.

on the program in a particular church. The result is that ministers place the needs of their local congregation ahead of the needs of the community. This was especially evident in the matter of institutional calling. Whereas 69 per cent call in charity hospitals, old folks' homes, and orphanages, if members of their church are inmates, only 18 p.c. visit in these institutions regularly if none of their members are present. With regard to jail visitation, 54 p.c. call if members of their church are occupants, while only 4.5 p.c. call regularly when none of their members are present.

Institutional calling, however, was urged as a type of work which ought to be done co-operatively under denominational or interdenominational auspices rather than by individual ministers. Yet the work was inadequately cared for in this manner. Only 18 per cent report that their denomination does such work and 24.6 p.c. state that the activity is carried on co-operatively by various denominations. In many of these cases, visitation is done by both denominational and interdenominational groups, which means that in an even larger number of localities the work is left undone. With regard to jail visitation, many consider themselves incapable of the work because they have had no special training for it. Thus the need for co-operation of the various denominations to provide trained workers is the more clearly seen.

What possibility is there for discharging this service on a co-operative basis? In 1929 a study was made by H. Paul Douglass¹¹ of the work of 29 federations of churches in which it was learned that 10 conducted religious services in jails and prisons; that 7 employed workers in juvenile courts; that 12 supported a pastoral visitor in hospitals; that 9 conducted regular religious services in hospitals and other institutions. While these figures indicate that considerably less than half the federations studied carry on such work in institutions, yet it also shows some federation groups recognized their responsibility in the matter. The question arises as to whether there is any possibility of the federations employing

¹¹Douglass, H. Paul, *Protestant Cooperation in American Cities*, p. 492.

a sufficient number of workers to carry on the whole program of institutional visitation and service. This possibility, it seems, is rather remote. In all probability, fewer bodies support workers in such institutions today than did in 1929, due to reduced income resulting from the depression.

The individual minister cannot meet the needs of his community even if he were inclined to do so. Neither can any particular denominational group carry out the full program in many of the larger cities. If individuals and groups, however, can co-ordinate their efforts with others, each contributing his share of service, all may have assurance that the people of their community are receiving pastoral attention.

It would seem, then, that to the usual duties of the church and the minister there would need to be added the duty of expanding loyalties to include the community as a whole, and of developing techniques of co-operation with other ministers and other agencies by means of which this larger responsibility can be fulfilled. The individualism of the past, while fitting nicely into the ethical perspectives of its time and place, would seem to be a bit out of focus today. Yet the ethical urges of the pastor are derived mostly from this past, so that he feels torn between two loyalties—loyalty to the old and established “rightness,” so clearly felt, and loyalty to the new and urgent need, so acutely felt. He has not been trained to deal with such issues. They present him with one of his major dilemmas.

THE DILEMMAS OF AUTHORITY

The third group of major issues, into which the second group may, and did, resolve itself, is centered in the question of moral authority. What are the sources of ethical judgment? In other professions, codes are developed by discussion and experience, and such authority over the individual conscience or action as they may have is derived from their obvious desirability or their

power of expressing established conventions and defining group opinion.

In the case of ministers, however, there is, in addition to these sources of authority, the body of revealed truth embodied in the Scriptures and in the doctrines and practices of the church. The authority is God's will as thus expressed. This may lead merely to unquestioning acceptance of what is taught by church leaders, or, on the other hand, to a sensitizing of individual conscience. Once the latter tendency gets well under way, it may issue in modes of behavior which contradict general church practice, either because the individual differently interprets the sacred writings, or because his interpretation of God's will is in such terms as necessitate his attending to the conditions of each problematical situation. Once he has admitted these conditions to his consideration, his ethical judgment proceeds to require as objective and impartial a study of the personal and social consequences of any line of action as the state of social and psychological science will permit.

All these conceptions are found operating in the determination of the practices and judgments of the clergy. For example, in the matter of marrying divorced couples, some hold strictly to the Scriptural doctrine; others, supposedly of the same school of thought, modify it by adding desertion as a legitimate cause; still others marry the innocent party in any case; and some feel that the only sound basis for decision is an investigation of all the circumstances with the view of finding what would be best for those concerned. Even the absolutists show variations in practice at times and even the scientifically minded are obliged to fall back on general rules when investigation proves impracticable. Even here, however, there is a fundamental cleavage between those whose ultimate standards are in terms of absolutes, such as justice, truth, the Scriptures, and those whose standards are relative and experimental. In the latter cases, God's will is not supposed to be clearly and finally revealed in past experience (particularly in

mystical experience) but is being revealed afresh as experiences under changing conditions are examined in the light of human need and the facts of personal and social change.

Similar differences in practice appear in reference to speech and action regarding social and civic issues. Some hold to the "Gospel," contenting themselves with handing down a body of revealed truth. Others regard their task as that of interpreting and expressing religion in terms of present-day situations. The focus of attention of the one group is doctrinal. That of the other is social, seeking to aid individuals in finding solutions to problems of everyday living in the contemporary world.

In like manner, various forms of community service are conditioned by presuppositions regarding the function of the church, some reaching out to minister to all groups in accordance with their discovered needs, and others restricting their service to purely ecclesiastical activities.

It is apparent in the evidence presented from these areas of ministerial practice that clergymen are not in agreement as to the function and character of the church, or the nature of God's will, and that these differences affect ministerial ethics. In the discussion of co-operation, it was indicated that the only hope for remedying many present evils is through the united action of the entire Protestant Church. Can such co-operation be achieved as long as these different conceptions exist with regard to the purpose of the church and the sources of ethical authority? The ministry is a house divided against itself.

Chapter IX

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MINISTRY

The ethical ambiguities reported in preceding chapters may seem almost inexplicable in the light of the high ideals ministers are called to serve. How is it that so many take hold of the horn of each dilemma which gives them greater security if not greater ease of conscience? Or has conscience been dulled by too intimate familiarity with human frailty? Or have right and wrong, or following Christ, been conceived in such general and abstract terms that infractions must be specified in the bond before they are recognized?

Need instances be reviewed? The state has legal conditions of marriage. Why go back of such standards? If the clergyman marries a couple, God has blessed the union and that's all there is to it. Why trouble prospective church members with particulars concerning the meaning of membership? It would be embarrassing, anyway, to have to hold them to such particulars or bring drastic methods of discipline to bear on offenders, especially in the case of social injustices. After all no one is responsible for the system, and bad people are really sick, needing the kind of help the ministry is not qualified to give.

As for "sheep stealing," it is easy to give too much consideration to the other minister involved. He may not be preaching the true faith, or holding his people, or attending to his duties. Anyway, each church needs all the members it can get. What are small courtesies in the light of that major fact? And as for service in institutions, particularly jails, where few church members are to be found, there is enough to do keeping people out of jail without taking on a task for which special preparation is required.

So many "never thought of the clergy fare as having any ethical

implication." Fees, perquisites, discounts—what are these but matters of custom and part of one's legitimate salary? Why make such a fuss over nothing? People like to give them.

ELEVATION OF STANDARDS

If this were all of the picture, there would be no point in going further. The fact is, however, that large numbers of ministers are dissatisfied with this situation and would like to bring the practices of the profession more nearly in line with its preaching. It is with this problem, and with this type of interest that this chapter and the one following have to do. What, if anything, can be done to improve matters?

We shall consider, first, what ministers themselves might possibly do, and shall turn then to the problem of teaching professional ethics in seminaries.

The first and most obvious procedure is for those who are not indifferent to high ethical standards to disengage themselves from questionable practices, whatever the personal consequences. This book is not a sermon and the authors are not advocating the universal adoption of this heroic measure. Some ministers seem to have been able to do so more completely than others. It is unlikely that much progress can be made along any line without the leadership and example of men of this type. We find them among other professional groups. There are doubtless more of these hidden away in forgotten parishes than is generally realized.

The second possibility is the old and tried procedure of getting a committee to work. Without a few men of the first type to take the work and the results of such a committee seriously, the possibility of reform through this channel is not promising. Yet it might be tried.

An example of this procedure is found in the profession of law. Julius Henry Cohen¹ quotes in part an address made by a Mr. Boston before the New York County Lawyers' Association on

¹Cohen, Julius Henry, *The Law: Business or Profession?*, p. 159.

October 6, 1910, in which a description is given of the work of such a committee. He says that the group "includes deans of law schools, professors in law schools, judges, prosecuting officers, public officials, and active practitioners, all members of the bar, in good professional repute." The members of the group discuss practical questions that come under their observation and attempt to apply fundamental ethical principles to actual situations or problems. The possible effect of such a group upon the ethical consciousness and upon the practice of men in a profession can be readily seen. Ethical principles and practical problems can continually be brought to their attention.

Groups such as this could well be formed within the ministerial profession. Members of those groups should be made up of professors in the seminary, officials of church boards, officials of church bodies, and pastors on the field. These committees could be formed within denominations, but committees ought also to be organized which go across denominational lines, since few problems of an ethical nature can be said to belong exclusively to particular denominations. Neither are questions of ministerial ethics confined to men in the pastorate and very few issues can be settled by pastors working alone. A glance at the main problems discussed in this volume shows that the seminaries, officials of denominational bodies, officials of church boards within denominations, and pastors, must all be considered if ethical difficulties are to be solved. The organization of committees on ethics seems to be a very important step toward creating a moral consciousness among the clergy and also toward bringing their practice to a higher ethical level.

A third possibility, closely related to the second, is the use of ministers' meetings for the discussion of ethical issues. Evidently pastors don't like such topics, for they rarely appear on the programs of meetings. Perhaps they are handled too subjectively. Perhaps, in the past, discussion has been based on the private opinions of individuals rather than on the matured reports of

competent committees. At all events, without carrying along with them the ministers who meet for conference and joint action, committees on ethics could hardly be expected to make much impression on the total situation.

A fourth possible means of elevating the standards of ministerial conduct and of bringing about an awareness of ethical issues is that of forming a code or codes of professional ethics, for the instruction of the clergy and for the guidance of their action. The drawing up of a code could be one function of a committee on ethics, since the principles contained in the code would seem to grow out of the study of problems confronting ministers in the field.

The mention of a professional code, however, at once brings to mind a previous question: Is the ministry a profession?

THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF THE MINISTRY

If the ministry is not a profession the action of the New York Presbytery in refusing to adopt a code may be understandable. A committee of the Presbytery presented such a code but "it was laughed out of court. It was felt to be lowering the dignity of the profession."² The view reflected here is not at all uncommon. The ministry is the noblest of the professions, or even outside the group of professions altogether—a "calling," which in its very nature renders its members subject to no man-made rules, but only to God.

Reflection on the data offered in this volume may cause one to question the ethical superiority of those who follow this calling, if not of the calling itself. And even at this point, the very suggestion that those called are called as individuals and are responsible only to God makes for the individualism and lack of co-operation with fellow ministers which is at the heart of many of the ethical issues that have been raised.

²From a letter from Reverend Theodore F. Savage to F. Darcy Bone, dated February 6, 1934.

It might be contended that the ministry, instead of being superior to all professions, has not yet achieved full status as a profession. Comparison with other occupations is helpful at this point. In a valuable article, Robert D. Kohn, Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, says of the development of professional groups:

The first stage of organization was to protect the members against unfair competition and to improve the profession in public consideration. Then followed the stage in which the relationships between members of the same profession were considered as most important; certain courtesies were to be extended from one member of the profession to another. Then they were bound together to prevent outsiders from interfering or to protect the profession against unjust laws. Next followed the movement to improve admission to practice; educational qualifications were established, and the schools were looked after. Finally there was attained the stage in which permanent importance is given to the relationship of the profession to the service which it may be expected to render—that is to say, the stage where public needs are placed paramount to professional rights or even desires. The various professions are today in different degrees within one or more of these several stages of development.³

A study of professional codes shows very clearly that all these emerging interests are represented, some to a greater degree than others. In the ministry, however, many of the ethical issues reported in this volume are the result of the failure of the ministry to develop even the earlier stages of a professional consciousness.

What are the criteria of a profession? Many answers have been given to this question.⁴ They may be combined and formulated to

³"The Significance of the Professional Ideal: Professional Ethics and the Public Interest." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 101: pp. 3-4, May, 1922. Quoted by permission.

⁴See Bibliography at the end of the book.

give seven reasonably clear indications of the achievement of professional status: *viz.* (1) the group must be limited in number; (2) there must be a definite function to perform in society; (3) the members must have sufficient preparation and skill to execute their professional activity in a more capable manner than can the amateur; (4) the practitioners must give evidence through licensure or similar process that they possess this preparation and skill; (5) they must show the tendency to organize into a guild for the purpose of formulating standards of preparation, admission, and practice, for personal security and for public welfare; (6) the responsibility for diagnosis and treatment must rest largely upon the practitioner himself; and (7) the primary motive of the group must be the service of the community or of a cause or ideal, with selfish aims subordinated.

With regard to the first criterion, that of limitation in number, if one considers the Protestant clergy as a whole, the ministry does not measure up very well. The standards of some groups are so low that there is scarcely any limitation in number of men who might enter. Almost any one who feels the call can find a way to get into the work. The reasons for this failure to make any restrictions regarding men entering the field are contained in the following statement:

On the whole, the efforts of theological institutions to appraise prospective students with a view to determining their potential fitness as ministers before they launch upon their theological course are irregular and superficial. The failure to establish any uniform practice in this matter probably goes back to the nature of the call to the ministry and the old philosophy concerning it. The "call" is felt to be such a personal thing—a matter between a man and his God—that the seminaries have been reluctant to interfere with a man's ambition to become a minister, however unpromising his qualifications may appear to be. Another phase of this difficulty lies in the fact that the seminaries, in turning away as-

pirants of this type, force them to secure the training they seek in schools of lesser rank which are willing to receive them.⁵

The present economic conditions, however, have resulted in an oversupply of ministers and it is this fact that offers some encouragement for the future in the matter of selection and limitation. The following quotation is in support of this contention:

But the spectacle of a surplus of ministers in many of the larger denominations is bringing the seminaries face to face with the necessity to attack this problem at its source by eliminating at the outset students who do not give reasonable promise of a successful ministry; and already a number of institutions have turned their attention to a more careful selection of students.⁶

As to the second criterion, there seems to be little question regarding the ministry having a definite and clearly marked function to perform in society. A statement setting forth the minister's work was formulated by a group of representative theological teachers who met at Cleveland in November, 1931, at the request of the Conference of Theological Seminaries. It reads as follows:

/ It is the function of the Christian ministry in all its forms (a) to increase man's knowledge of God as revealed in Jesus Christ; (b) to summon them to personal consecration to him and to his Gospel; (c) to lead them in their worship of God; (d) to be the counsellor of individual men and women in their personal duties and difficulties; (e) to furnish leadership to the Christian church in its educational, social, and missionary activities.⁷

With reference to the third characteristic of a profession, that of having sufficient preparation and skill to execute the func-

⁵May, Mark A., and others, *The Education of American Ministers*, Vol. III, p. 63. This and the two following quotations are used by permission of the present publishers, Harper & Brothers.

⁶May, Mark A., and others. *Loc. cit.*

⁷Brown, William Adams, *The Education of American Ministers*, Vol. I, p. 21.

tion more efficiently than can the amateur, the statement has already been made that if one considers the Protestant ministry as a whole, the standard of preparation is very low. A study made of the 1926 Census of Religious Bodies reveals that out of 71,500 ministers of seventeen white Protestant church bodies, "almost 29,500 did not claim to be either college or seminary graduates. In other words, 41 per cent did not allege that they were graduates of either type of institution, while only 33 p.c. stated that they were graduates of both college and seminary."⁸ The problem is enhanced by the multiplicity of denominations. While some church bodies, such as the Reformed, Lutheran, and Episcopal, maintain high standards, others like the Baptists and Methodists have failed to do so and the practice of the latter group colors the practice of the entire ministerial profession. There is some hope for the future, however, in the present tendency to raise the standards of qualification for the ministry.

A further issue connected with this third criterion is that of the type of training given in the theological seminaries. Is it professional or is it training such as would be given one learning a trade? One who sets out to learn a trade must master the skills necessary for the performance of the functions of that trade. A professional man, however, needs more than specific skills. He must acquire basic knowledge and a broad foundation of principles which not only enable him to meet the variety of present problems, but also prepare him to adapt himself and his work to future conditions. In other words, he is not bound to certain present mechanical methods of work.

It also appears, however, that almost any professional training is similar to that of the skilled tradesman in the sense that the student needs to have some experience in application of his principles. Thus we find the medical student is required to serve a year or more as an interne and the law student is more and more attaching himself to some large firm before entering

⁸Fry, C. Luther, *The United States Looks at Its Churches*, p. 64.

private practice. Since theological education has been established in schools the attempt has been made to do both, *i.e.*, give the knowledge of fundamental theological disciplines and also the more specific skills in application. The latter, however, have for the most part been limited to a type of practical advice that can be given in the classroom. It has been more a matter of telling the students "how" to do a task rather than having them actually do it. Recognizing this limitation, a number of seminaries have in recent years been emphasizing field work in connection with the theological course as affording opportunity to develop skill in applying their fundamental knowledge.

It has been stated as the fourth characteristic element of a profession that the practitioners must give evidence, through licensure or similar process, that they possess the proper preparation and skill. In some professions, such as law, medicine, teaching, pharmacy, and dentistry, the state issues the license, while in the ministry this matter is left with the individual church bodies. In the former group of professions a state board is set up which examines and passes upon licensure. This board acts primarily on behalf of the state, but in a broad sense it is acting in the interests of both members of the profession and the public. In the case of the ministry, the church body which must pass upon all candidates, such as the conference in the Methodist Church, the presbytery in the Presbyterian Church and the synod in the Lutheran Church, represents both the profession and the lay group served by members of the profession. Thus this body acts in a manner similar to that of the state examining boards for the first-mentioned group of professions, save that the general public is not represented.⁹

The fifth characteristic mark of a profession is the tendency to organize into a guild for the purpose of formulating standards of preparation, admission, and practice, for personal security and

⁹Bartlett, Lester W., and Neel, Mildred B., *Compensation in the Professions*, pp. 17-18.

public welfare. This has shown itself in the ministry in the organization of the Conference of Theological Seminaries, now the American Association of Theological Schools, which consists of a representative group of the schools in the United States and Canada. The organization was formed in 1918 and has since met biennially to discuss problems of general interest. A matter of common action which has resulted from this organization is the study of Protestant ministerial education.¹⁰

Although the ministers, as professional workers, do not have a national organization comparable to the organizations in other professions, such as the American Medical Association, American Bar Association, and National Education Association, nevertheless numerous local associations of ministers, both of one denomination and of many, have performed functions similar to those of other professional groups. The national organizations in other professions have brought about a strong feeling of solidarity among professional groups and have drawn up codes of ethics which bind their membership to certain standards of conduct. But while the ministry may have a strong feeling of professional solidarity within a denomination, that feeling does not cross denominational lines in any great measure.¹¹ There is no general code regulating the activity of the clergy.

With regard to the sixth mark of a profession, that in which the practitioner himself is largely responsible for diagnosis and treatment, the ministry qualifies very adequately. The local minister is the leader of the church and in the many specific problems which arise the solution depends almost entirely upon him.

The final criterion of a profession is concerned with the sense of loyalty. As already noted, this is stated sometimes in terms of serving the public interest and at other times in terms of loyalty to a cause or an ideal. Members of the ministerial profes-

¹⁰May, Mark A., and others, *Op. cit.*

¹¹MacDonald, William, *The Intellectual Worker and His Work*, p. 127.

sion also show their sense of loyalty in these two respects, although in general it is loyalty to God's will and to the Scriptures and to the church that is uppermost in the minds of ministers and service to the public is often interpreted as service to the local church only.

What then of our question regarding the professional status of the ministry? It would hardly seem that pastors are in a position to look with pride at themselves, in comparison with other groups, and possibly just what they need is to get off dignity enough to work out the basic principles of co-ordinated effort, call these a code or what you will.

EFFORTS TOWARD PROFESSIONAL CODES

The need for much thought on this problem of the basic principles of co-ordinated Christian work is revealed not only in the tale of confused and chaotic practice we have been reporting, but also in the efforts heretofore made to create codes. The story has not been wholly recorded, but a few features may be presented here, even though they do not make a complete record.

What appears to be one of the earliest of modern codes is that adopted by the New Haven (Conn.) Association of Congregational Ministers.¹² According to Landis it was adopted in 1925. Its rules seem to be of three general types, namely, those concerned (1) with personal standards, (2) with relations to the parish, and (3) with relations to the profession.

A second code appeared in the December 16, 1926, issue of *The Christian Century*, and is reported to have been adopted by a conference of Methodist ministers at Rockford, Illinois, in that year. No response, however, could be secured from the Rock River Conference of the Methodist Church to confirm this report. The code appears to be almost identical with that of the

¹²Leach, William H., *Church Administration*, pp. 24-27; also Landis, Benson Y., *Professional Codes*, pp. 67-68.

Congregational group just mentioned. We do not know which was the earlier.

A third code was printed in *The Literary Digest*, July 24, 1926. Although this code was presented to the Presbytery of New York, it was not adopted, according to the statement of Mr. Savage, executive secretary of that Presbytery, as already noted. Its rules deal with personal standards, relations with the parish, and relations with the profession. Doctor Leach holds that it is based upon the earlier codes already mentioned.

A Unitarian Code is printed in the August, 1926, number of *Church Management*. A few of its articles are different from those mentioned. It was drafted by Charles R. Joy, then secretary of the Unitarian Ministerial Union. In a letter from Doctor Joy under date of April 24, 1934, he has this to say regarding its adoption:

The minutes of the meeting at which this Code of Ministerial Ethics was considered show that, with a few dissenting votes, it was decided to send this Code to all of the ministers in the fellowship. That action, of course, implied approval by the Union at its regular meeting, but there is no motion which specifically states that it was endorsed by the Unitarian Ministerial Union in the record book. I believe you are right in assuming its endorsement by the meeting, which was a regular meeting of the national Union.

The four codes named were also printed in the book by Nolan B. Harmon, *Ministerial Ethics and Etiquette*, and were used as general reference throughout that work.

One other code, which appeared at least as early as if not prior to the above four codes, was prepared by Doctor N. J. Gould Wickey, then Professor of Philosophy, Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota, and pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Fargo, N. D. This code is in outline form and contains six virtues and six duties. The virtues are passion for God, passion for character, passion for truth, passion for righteousness, passion

for service, and passion for souls. The duties listed are to self, to parish, to community, to fellow ministers, to denomination, and to the profession.

Another group of codes appeared at a later date, some being drawn up by ministers and others by theological students. In the January, 1932, issue of *The Theological Forum*, published by the Norwegian Lutheran Church of America, a code appears under the title "Code of Ethics for Lutheran Pastors." Beneath the title is the following statement: "Presented to the Pastoral Conference of Northern Minnesota District of Fergus Falls, Minn., Nov. 9-11, 1930. Adopted Nov. 10, 1931." This code is divided into a Preamble; four parts under the heads, My Ministry, My Life, My Relation to Synod, District and Circuit, and Our Relation to One Another; and Conclusion. It is unique in that Scripture passages sometimes are inserted as support for the rules.

The Official Reports and District Resolutions to the Twenty-sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Synod of North America, held in Cincinnati, Ohio, Oct. 3-10, 1933, contain "A Proposed Ministerial Code of Ethics Worked Out by the Committee on Correlation and Recommended by the General Council." This code consists of five types of rules under the following heads: Personal Standards; Relations with the Parish; Relation to the Community; Relations with the Profession; and Relations with the Denomination. Many of the rules of this code are identical with those of an earlier date, but it contains several principles not included in any other.

Perhaps the earliest of student codes is one drawn up by the divinity students of Yale University. This was published in *School and Society*, under date of December 4, 1926. Another of the student codes is reported as having been adopted by the Boston University School of Theology (unpublished). The material apparently is not based upon the earlier codes and it is also drawn up in a different form. Dean Albert C. Knudson makes

the following comment in a letter under date of January 19, 1934:

The Code of Ethics to which you refer in your letter was prepared by the senior class of 1929. Whether it was formally adopted by the student body as a whole, I do not know. I have not recently heard any reference to it, though a very distinct effort is made by the officers of our Student Organization to encourage the observance of the spirit of the Code, and I should say also the rules that it lays down.

A third student group adopting a code of ethics is that of the ministerial students at Spokane University, Spokane, Washington. Their body of rules appears in the August, 1931, issue of *Church Management*, under three classifications, namely, the man, relations to the church, and special occasions. Part of this code seems to be based upon the principles contained in the earlier group. The rules under "special occasions," however, are for the most part not found in other ethical codes.

THE CODE COMPLEX

It is hard to formulate a code. Of those which have been set up it would seem as though the authors felt the compulsion of the ideal, but, in order to be practical, presented a compromise for guidance. Or, failing to state a satisfactory compromise, the code leaves it up to the minister to decide whether he will "follow the gleam," without giving him much light on any alternate path. Some of these difficulties may be illustrated from existing codes.

As in other professions, the clergyman has many obligations incumbent upon him. He has duties to his parish, to the community, to other members of his profession, to his denomination, to his family and himself, and to uphold truth as he finds it. These various duties may at times conflict. It is out of such conflict that emerge many of the problems of ministerial ethics.

Each duty represents a corresponding value and when a conflict exists between duties, it must somehow be resolved.

The manner in which conflicts arise between duties becomes more clear as reference is made to specific rules. For example, one of the principles of the Boston University Code states: "Our first loyalty will be to the teachings of Jesus, and we will fearlessly carry them to their logical conclusions." A similar principle of the Evangelical, Congregational, and Methodist Codes reads: "As a public interpreter of divine revelation and human duty the minister should tell the truth as he sees it and present it tactfully and constructively." But suppose there are people within the congregation who object to some of the views of the minister and they begin to exert their influence to undermine his work. Will his loyalty to truth be stronger than his desire to provide for his family?

The minister, like members of other professions, may also find discord arising between his professional ideal, the giving of service, and his own acquisitive impulses. The ministerial profession places service to the community above the minister's own livelihood. For example, the Congregational Code states that, "As a professional man the minister should make his service primary and the remuneration secondary." But there follows immediately in the same article this statement: "His efficiency, however, demands that he should receive a salary adequate to the work he is expected to do and commensurate with the scale of living in that parish which he serves." The same code, in another article, says, "The minister recognizes himself to be the servant of the community in which he resides." But then it adds, "Fees which are offered should be accepted only in the light of this principle." Thus the motive of self-maintenance seems always to be closely related to the ideal of community service.

Conflict may develop likewise between the duties of the minister toward his church and his obligations toward the community. The Presbyterian Code referred to says, "The minister

is the servant of the community and not only of his church, and should find in the opportunity for general ministerial service a means of evidencing the Christian spirit." But the church group may insist that the minister confine his service to those who are members or to those who show some possibility of becoming members. In the case of such conflict the clergyman's security would again be at stake and the community interest might be obscured.

Furthermore there may be a clash between rules designed for developing the proper professional relations and the ideal of serving the needs of people. The Evangelical Code states: "It is unethical for a minister to interfere directly or indirectly with the congregational work of another minister. He should carefully avoid proselyting from another church." Similar rules are contained in most of the other codes. Consider, now, the following situation: A family belonging to a church located in the center of a city moves into the suburbs. They cease to go regularly to the church because of the distance. A suburban minister, into whose vicinity the family has moved, discovers they are in his community. He is informed that they do not go to their church regularly because of the distance, so he invites them to his service. After they have attended for a period of several months, he invites them to unite with his church and they do so. The downtown pastor then accuses the suburban man of proselyting and interfering with his people. He feels the suburban man has no right to the family because, in order to maintain his church in the center of the city, he must have support of people in the outlying communities. The suburban man, however, justifies his action on the ground that the family would have been lost to the church in time because of a lack of close contact with it, and argues further that the nearby church can better serve the people. This not only illustrates the possibility of conflict between rules for governing professional relations and those regarding the community interest, but it also indicates

a lack of policy on the part of our general church bodies and a failure to define the proper procedure in such cases.

The value of codes of ethics for ministers would depend quite largely upon the representative character of committees formulating them and upon the thoroughness with which committees study moral problems. A code built by a denominational group to guide its own members would have some value, but as already indicated most problems cut across denominational lines, and a code would therefore be of greater significance if competent representatives of different denominations served in the formulating of the document.

A code based upon adequate research and a knowledge of the moral issues involved might serve well as an educational instrument and also as a guide for conduct. On the other hand, a code which consists of a series of pious platitudes is only reflecting one of the weaknesses of the ministry itself in its assumption that conduct is ordered by such formulæ. Our American idealism takes strange shapes, but none stranger than its satisfaction with high-sounding phrases.

Chapter X

RESPONSIBILITIES OF SEMINARIES

It was the frequent complaint of the ministers whose practices and opinions are recorded in this study that problems of professional ethics were not discussed in their seminary preparation. An examination of the courses offered in fifty-seven seminaries tends to corroborate their recollection, for in none of these schools, as noted in the Introduction, was any course offered which could be identified as professional ethics for the ministry.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN THE TEN SEMINARIES

Course titles, however, are not always reliable indices of subject matter, and so an effort was made to find out from professors in departments of Christian ethics, social ethics, sociology, and psychology, as well as in practical theology, just how much attention was actually paid to ethical aspects of the ministry. And, of course, it was found that materials touching upon such problems were presented. Even two professors of Old Testament claimed to treat ethical points of the practical ministry. These materials, however, were obviously casual references for the most part, and involved no systematic attempt to get at the root of the issues faced by ministers in the field.

Definite Provision for the Teaching of Ethics

One might expect that courses in practical theology would handle such problems differently, but little evidence was found to support this expectation. Although most of the professors giving work in this department assert that they raise ethical issues in their discussion of practical problems, the treatment seems inadequate. One man who claims to deal with ethics

says, in another connection, "I have never lectured on ministerial ethics except incidentally in my annual course in pastoral theology, and have never, therefore, made any particular search for material." There is also a minority feeling that ethical aspects need not have specific treatment. Each minister, it is thought, will be able to act in an ethical way on the basis of his general Christian training. The following comment illustrates the view: "I feel very definitely that a man has to take up the details of ethics and answer them for himself. He has a spiritual background and must answer in the light of his Christianity." According to another professor, ethical standards of ministers are not heightened by discussing in the seminary special problems of conduct. Rather, he feels, when students are imbued with the social gospel and are made sensitive to social issues, this will in turn elevate their pattern of action in the pastorate on ethical matters.

It seems evident that the only teaching on ethical aspects of ministerial practice in our seminaries is given incidentally in connection with other courses.

Sources of Teaching Material

Conferences with professors of practical theology in the ten co-operating seminaries revealed that basic material for this incidental teaching comes from a number of sources. We note, first, the experience of faculty members in the active pastorate. All the men teaching in this field have at some period had charge of churches. The time served varies from three to thirty years, the major portion having been in the pastorate fifteen years or more. The man who held a church for only three years was subsequently engaged in administrative work for almost two decades. He then took over the task of teaching in the seminary. Following his assumption of these duties, he served in the churches for the summer and during periods of pulpit vacancy in order to supplement his early practical training.

Two professors are regular pastors at the present time. The pastorate is the major task of one and his teaching is only incidental, consisting of a course which meets for one two-hour session each week for a term of eleven weeks. In the other case the professorship is primary. This man's present pastorate was assumed originally to provide an opportunity by which students might secure clinical experience and at the same time receive some help on their school expenses.

We may conclude that most professors of practical theology in the ten co-operating seminaries have had considerable experience in the active pastorate.

Reference works are a second source of subject matter used in conducting courses in practical theology. Although these are employed rather extensively, yet the professors state that in their survey of literature they have found no books satisfactory as texts. The material is thought to be even more inadequate in the specific subject of ministerial ethics. The usual comment is that "no real study has been made in this field." It is mentioned further "that the works published consist of the experience of the writers plus their observation," and are not supported by adequate research.

One of the best treatments of professional ethics is contained in the book, *Ministerial Ethics and Etiquette*, by Nolan B. Harmon. The writer claims more value for his discussion than if it were based upon his experience only. Four codes that had appeared up to that date are used as reference throughout. Concerning the codes he says, "Since these were adopted by ministerial bodies more or less large, they have a greater weight than the judgment of an individual minister."¹ But at least one of the codes has had no official sanction, as was pointed out in the preceding chapter, and it may be questioned whether the others were based on careful research.

Another volume bearing upon the field of ethics, mentioned

¹Harmon, Nolan B., *Op. cit.*, p. 12.

frequently by professors and pastors, is that by Henry Wilder Foote, *The Minister and His Parish*, 1923. It is "a discussion of problems in Church Administration" and contains five chapters dealing particularly with topics which have reference to ethical issues. The titles of these chapters are:

The Rights and Duties of the Minister
 The Church Finances
 The Minister's Salary and Fees
 The Ethics of the Ministerial Profession
 The Liberty of the Pulpit

Although Doctor Foote has had a wide experience, his work is subject to the same criticism of being based upon insufficient research.

Clausen, Douglass, McAfee, "R. E. X.," Leach, Gladden, and DeWitt have all written books dealing more or less directly with professional ethics and there are also a great many works on pastoral care, pastoral psychology, homiletics, and so on, which have some indirect reference to the subject.² It appears, however, from our examination of these works that no book has issued from any theological seminary representing careful research and thought that would compare with those written by Hicks, Jessup, Cohen, and Archer in the field of legal ethics or with the works of Professor Taeusch in the area of business ethics.

The discipline and rules of order of the church bodies constitute a third source of material essential for teaching ministerial ethics. The Methodist Discipline and the Canon Law of the Episcopal Church contain rather definite instructions for the clergy on some phases of practice, and since in these two churches the organization has power to enforce its rules, it is rather important that students be informed concerning them. On the issue of marrying divorced persons, for example, a

²See Bibliography at end of volume.

Methodist professor states, "My advice to the boys has been to follow the law of the church in respect to marriage and I urge them not to become lax. . . . I have known of Bishops bringing men to account for alleged maladministration in this point."

On the other hand, the pronouncements of churches which do not have the power to compel adherence to their rules assume a less important place as teaching material. With regard to the same question of marrying divorced persons, one of these men says, "I tell what the church stand on divorce is, but that rule does not solve the problem. I don't go with my church in advocating specific solutions." Another evaluates this material for teaching by stating the effect it has upon men in the field: "The church always passes a series of resolutions but I do not think they have much influence on the pastors. It looks to me like a useless piece of work." Thus in churches of a more democratic organization, such as the Baptist and Congregational, the official pronouncements of the church do not loom large as subject-matter for teaching.

A final source of material for the classroom comes from the experience of students in field work. This is rated by faculty members as important. In eight of the ten seminaries, more than half of the students are engaged in field activity of some kind, according to the assertion of professors who were interviewed. Of the remaining two institutions, one does not look with favor upon such work, especially that of the student pastorate. The comment of the dean follows:

We do not emphasize field work while the students are in the seminary. I do not believe in it. Students who become involved in student pastorates cannot do their work properly in the divinity school. The seminary is a place primarily for preparation.

The other seminary is not antagonistic to field activity but is limited in its ability to supply this opportunity for students because of its location.

In two schools all the men are engaged in some type of field endeavor before completing their course. One professor states that "no man is permitted to graduate until he has done successfully some piece of practical work."

The kind of field activity in which students engage is, naturally, an important consideration. A considerable number are in pastorates, some are assistants and directors of religious education, while others are doing Sunday-school, social service, and boys' club work, and some are employed on jobs which have no obvious bearing upon their future professional careers.³

The field work of students is evidently not likely, as at present organized, to provide all the material needed for the study of professional ethics.

Scope of Issues Treated

There were no notes or outlines of courses available in most cases. When professors were pressed for material used, the following problems were mentioned as having been discussed:

- Marriage
- Funerals
- Financing the church
- Social and economic issues
- Political issues
- Service to community organizations and institutions
- Fees
- Special privileges
- Pastoral calling
- Church membership classes
- Church discipline
- Freedom of the pulpit
- Plagiarism
- Transfer of church members
- Relations with predecessor and successor
- Recreation and vacation

³Cf. the study of this problem in Chapter Ten of *The Education of American Ministers*, Vol. III.

Home and family
Publicity
Keeping records
Making reports to denominational officials

Not all the above were raised by any one of the faculty men, however, and there was considerable variation in number of topics handled. To illustrate, the question of receiving fees is never discussed in one seminary (interdenominational). The professor interviewed states that the difference in denominational practice is the reason for this omission. Again, issues in connection with transfer of church members are not brought before classes in another institution because of the fact that students in small pastorates have not met such problems and will not meet them for a number of years. On the same ground, other important topics are not touched upon in the latter school.

Even greater variation seems to be present regarding sub-points dealt with under a general topic. On the question of political and social issues, for example, while one man apparently does no more than lay down the principle of separation of church and state, another goes into the details of specific action, such as making investigations and working with labor unions.

It was apparent in these interviews that no well thought out body of material is available and that there is no generally recognized practice regarding scope of issues to be treated.

Method of Conducting Courses

As to the way in which these materials are handled, the lecture and discussion methods seem to be used primarily. Reference works are usually suggested and term papers on practical problems are occasionally required. From the description given by some professors of their teaching procedure, the lecture apparently consists largely of relating the experiences they have had in the pastorate, rather than of presenting an organized body of material. One states that it "is more or less of a running

talk and the men break in with comments." He says further, "I do not take up any question in this course that I have not dealt with in my own experience." A second says his method is composed of "a series of talks and discussions" and that "perhaps some might be dignified by the term 'lectures.'"

The discussions usually center around cases which have been contributed either by the professor or by students. Again, from their description, the presenting of cases appears to be more or less a recital of anecdotes. Not enough information concerning a case is given, it seems, to enable one to discover real issues. Whereas often only a few statements are devoted to the narration of factors involved in a case, one notes that in the volume on legal ethics by Professor Hicks,⁴ several pages are sometimes given over to this purpose.

Professors criticize the case method now and then on the ground that when a student solves one problem he is prone to assume other problems can be met in the same manner. A misconception of the use of case materials is apparently involved in this attack. Professor Taesch clarifies the point when he says, "Cases should be used, not as the solution of problems but rather as the basis for development of issues."⁵

There seems also to be a tendency to state general principles only, without raising the underlying issues. For example, concerning relations with fellow ministers, the statement that "a high professional code should prevail" covers the treatment of one man. But this appears to be little more than what students call "moralizing." Others, in the attempt to become more specific, advise the men "not to interfere with members of another church." This generalized treatment would not reveal the intricate problems occasionally arising when one minister renders service to members of another church, nor would it indicate the

⁴Hicks, Frederick C., *Organization and Ethics of the Bench and Bar*.

⁵Letter from Carl F. Taesch, Associate Professor of Business Ethics, Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration, under date of February 8, 1934.

underlying cause of difficulties in the transfer of church members.

Value of Teaching

As already stated, the instruction in this area is generally regarded as inadequate by the alumni of these institutions. They declare that ethical issues are seldom touched upon. Regarding the question of fees, one minister says, "We were led to consider that accepting them was a part of our compensation. The ethical question was not raised." On other topics, vital points are often not mentioned, according to the clergy. Concerning the question of marriage, attention for the most part was given to the method of conducting the ceremony. Where the church body holds a definite position on divorce, ministers state that also was presented. But many other phases of the marriage problem, such as interviewing, counselling, sex life, birth control, were left untouched.

They likewise offer criticism of the teaching technique employed in this department of the seminaries. It is intimated that professors tend merely to give advice on the basis of their experience in the pastorate. A typical response regarding instruction is that there was "nothing of any real practical importance, except a glimpse into the common practice of a few teaching preachers."

Professors, themselves, testified to the ineffectiveness of their teaching. One says he is unable to challenge students with these practical matters. Such discussions seem to them to be "trivial" and "foolish," and unworthy of their consideration. A second refers to the difficulty of "putting things across to students." He says that "they are not in the ministry five weeks before they begin to write back asking, 'What would you do in this case?'" Usually we had had the case before the class but it didn't register." A third professor is of the opinion that unless students are ~~doing~~ field work and have met the problems which are raised

in the class, discussion of these problems will be of little value to them. This professor therefore discusses only those issues which students have confronted in their pastorates. This procedure, however, seems to place a serious limitation upon the teaching of ministerial ethics, since, according to the testimony of the same man, many ethical issues do not occur in the more or less isolated communities of some student pastorates. Thus it appears that students are not made aware of many of these problems before graduation.

THE TEACHING OF ETHICS IN OTHER PROFESSIONS

From what has been said about the teaching of ethics in theological schools and from the need for this teaching as shown by ministerial practice and opinion, a number of conclusions might be drawn which would have bearing on what the seminaries might and should do. Before attempting to draw up any such set of implications, it would be well to look a little more closely into the practice of other professional schools.

Martin⁶ reports three types of provision for teaching in this field: (1) definite courses are given by 42 per cent of the professional schools of eight professions; (2) specific treatment in other courses is given by 41 p.c.; and (3) incidental consideration in all courses is the method of treatment in 4 p.c. of the schools. In 13 p.c. no instruction is given in professional ethics.

Of the 296 schools reporting definite courses in Martin's study, 92 per cent require them of all students and 8 p.c. offer them as electives. Schools departing most widely from the general practice of prescribing the subject for all students are those of business and teaching. Fifty p.c. of the former and 35 p.c. of the latter offer such courses as electives.

Although it is clear that the situation in theological education

⁶Martin, Theodore D., "Ethics in the Teaching Profession," *Research Bulletin of the National Education Association*, Vol. IX, No. 1, January, 1931.

is radically different, as regards the teaching of professional ethics, from that in other professions, nevertheless judgment among these other groups is by no means unanimously in favor of such teaching. At one time there seemed little need for teaching ethics to prospective lawyers, for example, and the issue was not raised. The young aspirant to the law profession secured work as a clerk with an active practitioner and studied law during spare hours. This practical and theoretical training equipped him technically for his own practice later, and at the same time, because of his intimate contact with his superior, he became acquainted with the ideals, traditions, and approved practices of the profession. In recent years, however, law schools have rapidly developed, and because of the large number of men attending these schools, instruction has become impersonal. Thus little opportunity is offered for learning professional ideals through contact with professors. Ethical issues have also become difficult to recognize on account of the growing complexity of legal problems and the close association of law with business interests.⁷

These changed conditions have resulted in many lawyers being disbarred because of "pure ignorance" of the ideals and standards of their profession.⁸ In turn they led many leaders in the law field to see the need of instructing students in the approved procedures before they entered into active practice, and appeals were therefore sent to law schools asking them to introduce courses in legal ethics.

These appeals arose from two sources. The first came from committees of ethics in various states which attempted to see that "either by persuasion or by the compulsion of rules of court, law schools expecting their certificate of graduation to be accepted by bar examiners . . . should prescribe and faithfully carry out a certain number of hours of lectures upon the subject

⁷Martin, Theodore D., *Op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

⁸Cohen, Julius Henry, *The Law: Business or Profession?*, p. 215.

of legal ethics."⁹ The second source is that of the American Bar Association, which not only has adopted canons of ethics, but has recommended to the law schools of the United States that a course in legal ethics be placed in the curriculum as a "required subject" and that "systematic and definite instruction be given."¹⁰ Although Jessup tells us that these efforts were "ignored," apparently some definite results were achieved, for we note from Martin's study that 67 per cent of the law schools reported definite courses in professional ethics.

There is still considerable opposition upon the part of some leaders in the law profession, however, to the teaching of professional ethics. It is the contention of this group that changing conditions have not increased the need for instruction; that law schools provide adequate training and experience to enable the student to secure knowledge of professional etiquette; that the primary requisite for a lawyer is to be a gentleman;¹¹ and that definite courses usually lack a relation to life, thus becoming uninteresting and ineffective.¹²

There is a similar diversity of practice and opinion regarding instruction in professional ethics in schools of medicine. According to Martin, 43 per cent offer definite courses in the subject, 28 p.c. provide for specific treatment in other courses, 9 p.c. give incidental consideration, and 20 p.c. make no provision for instruction. One group considers the teaching of medical ethics unnecessary and undesirable on the ground that the student absorbs his professional ideals in the school through contact with professors and continues to do so in later life through association with other physicians.

A second group, made up of equally influential leaders in the medical field, hold that the mass production of physicians has so

⁹Jessup, Henry Wynans, "The Ethics of the Legal Profession," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 101: May, 1922, p. 25.

¹⁰Archer, Gleason L., *Ethical Obligations of the Lawyer*, p. 35.

¹¹Cf. the view that the primary requisite of the minister is to be a Christian.

¹²Martin, Theodore D., *Op. cit.*, p. 13.

obscured the stimulating contact of the student with the practitioner that a definite course should be given in which the problems of professional relationship are emphasized.

Among the men who most strongly insist upon the teaching of this subject in medical schools are those who have introduced courses into their curricula and testify as to their value.

As in law, those members of the medical profession who favor systematic ethical instruction are constantly urging that medical schools include this work in their program of studies. The Council on Medical Education and Hospitals of the American Medical Association at a business meeting on February 13, 1927, adopted a report which was later sent to all deans of medical schools urging them to include in the curriculum a course in medical ethics.

Notwithstanding the efforts made to encourage medical schools to introduce the teaching of ethics into their schedule, the opposition apparently still continues, and one-fifth of the schools offer no courses in this subject.

It has been noted that there are three types of administrative provisions made for instruction in professional ethics. All provisions, according to Martin, have criticisms levelled against them. The first, or incidental consideration, meets objection on the ground that treatment is usually accidental and thus often the ethical aspects are not dealt with at all.

The second, that of dealing with the subject in connection with other courses, is criticized for the reason that it does not give sufficient consideration to the many problems of professional men today. It is thought that "the problems of professional conduct are sufficiently numerous, important, and difficult to warrant separate treatment in a definite, full-fledged course."¹⁸

In regard to the third, that of devoting full courses to the study, much of the objection, aside from the view that courses

¹⁸Martin, Theodore D., *Op. cit.*, p. 23.

are not needed, seems to hinge around the difficulty of making the teaching vital. This difficulty is especially apparent where students are divorced from the practical field.

Experience in a number of law schools has shown that it is possible to treat ethics in connection with concrete cases and yet do so in a course devoted entirely to the subject. Case materials are brought into the classroom with sufficient description to reproduce the setting from which the cases arise. To facilitate this procedure for teaching legal ethics, Professor Frederick C. Hicks of the Yale Law School has written a volume¹⁴ in which cases are relied upon for basic material. Courses in legal ethics offered by the Harvard Law School and also by New York University and Columbia University Schools of Law are given largely from the case point of view.¹⁵

Of the validity of the case method for teaching ethics, Professor Richard C. Cabot said as early as 1926: "I have already tried it out enough to convince me that it is the proper way to proceed." Rather than have a professor lay down ethical principles to the students, he says that principles of ethics will naturally be revealed in frank classroom discussion of concrete problems.¹⁶

It seems apparent, in spite of statements to the contrary, that ethics can be taught in a regular course with a considerable degree of success, provided the practical situation is reproduced in which ethical issues occur.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TEACHING OF MINISTERIAL ETHICS

The Need for Better Teaching

Certain implications for the teaching of ministerial ethics may be drawn from the practices of ministers and from the present status of teaching. The first has to do with the need for better

¹⁴Hicks, Frederick C., *Organization and Ethics of the Bench and Bar*.

¹⁵A statement in a letter from Carl F. Taesch, Associate Professor of Business Ethics, Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration, under date of February 8, 1934.

¹⁶*Adventures on the Borderlands of Ethics*, pp. 70-71.

teaching. Evidence which points to this need has been gathered from a number of sources, which may be briefly reviewed: First, the fact that schools of other professions are trending toward the teaching of professional ethics.

Second, the fact that theological schools at present do not offer courses in professional ethics. Any teaching of ministerial ethics that is done occurs incidentally in connection with other courses. And since incidental treatment is usually accidental, many issues of ministerial ethics are probably never considered.

Third, the inadequacy of present source materials. The works in the field of ministerial ethics are based, for the most part, upon the personal experience and observation of the writers, and are not supported by a general study of the whole situation.

Fourth, the limitation in the scope of issues treated by professors in their teaching. There is great variation in number and type of problems handled, and it is evident that no generally recognized practice exists in regard to topics to be dealt with.

Fifth, the tendency to resort to anecdotes rather than to analyze well-developed cases, and to give advice in the form of platitudes rather than to help students deal intelligently with situations and the consequences of particular lines of action.

Sixth, the fact that both ministers and professors object to the present instruction, the one group saying they were not taught, the other saying that when these same men were students they were not interested in being taught. Some state that teaching should be "definite and specific" and that "ministerial ethics ought to be a required course."

The seventh source of evidence of the need for better teaching is shown in the study of practices and attitudes of ministers on the field. Three major issues were reported as affecting ethical practice, namely, the problem of insecurity *versus* conscience, the problem of individualism *versus* co-operation, and the problem of absolute *versus* relative moralities. If inadequate income and insecurity affect ministerial practice adversely, students

should be made aware of that fact, and, further, the seminaries might well be expected to lead students to examine the various plans being tried and proposed for bringing sufficient income and security to the clergy. With regard to the problem of co-operation, it was shown that unless clergy within denominations and across denominational lines work together, certain issues of ministerial ethics cannot be dealt with satisfactorily. The seminaries have the responsibility of training students to think in terms of co-operation and to see the results of working together. In the case of the third problem it was indicated that different ethical theories held by ministers lead to conflicting practice. Seminaries should guide students in examining both theory and practice in order that they may see the results which conflicting theories produce.

Administrative Provisions

A second implication relates to the administrative provisions required for meeting the need for the teaching of ministerial ethics. In schools of eight professions some provision is usually made, and in 42 per cent of these schools definite courses, most of which are required of all students, are offered.

In theological schools, however, no courses are offered in the field of professional ethics. Neither did the interviews with professors of practical theology in the co-operating seminaries reveal treatment of the subject in specific units of other courses. What teaching is done seems to be of the incidental type, which is inadequate. The question arises as to what administrative provision should be made for this field of study in the seminaries. If incidental treatment is unsatisfactory, as we have concluded earlier, should seminaries be urged to inaugurate full courses in professional ethics or would the subject be adequately handled in specific units of other courses?

On the basis of the present evidence, it is impossible to draw definite conclusions in the matter. In schools of other professions

a relatively even number follow the two types of practice. In theological seminaries apparently neither procedure has been tried. Thus one cannot determine the relative merits of the two methods of handling the subject. Experimentation seems to be necessary in order to settle the question. But it might be fairly concluded that either full courses should be offered in the subject or specific units in other courses should be devoted to a consideration of ethical issues. In addition, it would still be possible to give incidental attention to ethical questions as they arise in connection with various courses.

Need for Continuing Education

A third implication of our study is concerned with the need for continuing education in professional ethics after leaving the seminary. This need is shown not only by the lack of ethical consciousness and by the variety of practice existing among men on the field, but it is also indicated by the fact that changing social conditions bring new problems for the ministry. For example, shifting population brings financial difficulties to some churches which at one time had no such problems, and, as has been stated earlier, finance affects the ethical practice of clergymen. Ethical principles of action must be constructed, therefore, to meet these new problems. Another factor which points to the need for continuing education is that certain issues do not seem vital to students while in the seminary because of their lack of experience. If teaching lacks vitality for students, it will probably have little influence on later practice. Hence the necessity for further consideration of ethics after the clergy have gone into the pastorate.

The question arises as to what opportunities are available for providing ethical instruction to ministers on the field. Meetings of ministers and courses in summer schools are possibilities. The seminaries could work with ministers in setting up programs for association meetings in which ethical problems would be

considered, and they could also include courses of ethical instruction in their summer-school programs. Postgraduate study for ministers near the seminaries and extension courses for those at a distance might provide teaching in the ethical field. Apparently none of these educational opportunities have been used by the seminaries, according to the evidence, but the facts, on the other hand, seem to point definitely to the need for some type of continuing education.

The Need for Research

The necessity for research in the field of ministerial ethics is a fourth implication of this study. The need is demonstrated by the inadequacy of present source materials and also by the lack of any generally recognized practice regarding the scope of issues to be treated. That research would meet a felt need is likewise shown in the expressed desire of at least one professor for a volume of case materials.

It seems to be incumbent upon the seminaries to exercise leadership in the work of research. Presumably they are equipped with men capable of making scientific investigations. At any rate, it would appear that seminary professors should be sufficiently awake to the problems of men on the field to initiate projects of inquiry, if the need is evident.

As to a method of discovering whether an investigation should be made in a particular field of ministerial practice, one procedure would be to set up committees on ethics. In discussing the personnel of such committees it was suggested that seminary professors should be included. If committees on ethics do not exist within the profession at the present time, which seems to be true, perhaps the first step seminaries might take toward bringing about adequate research would be the organization of such committees. As these committees studied the problems of ministers on the field and attempted to work out principles of

action, the need for particular projects of inquiry would become evident.

From the results of study by these committees, and the more extensive investigations they might initiate, there would gradually be developed a body of materials for teaching. When vital issues are discovered, cases can be compiled revealing these issues, which can then be incorporated into a course of study, or set up as specific units to be included in other courses.

Necessity of Practical Experience

A fifth implication points to the value of practical experience as an aid for teaching ministerial ethics. The evidence indicates that where students have done field work, teaching has more interest and value for them. One professor considers experience on the field so important for teaching that he raises only problems which are encountered by men in their student pastorates. There seems also to be a trend toward increasing field work activity. But in so far as it cannot be provided in connection with the present curriculum, the possibility of dealing adequately with ethical issues under seminary auspices would seem to be related to the possibility of introducing a fourth year into the seminary curriculum to be spent on the field, probably as an assistant to some successful pastor, and presumably between the present second and third years of study. While agitation for this additional year has not come because of any interest in teaching ministerial ethics, yet it would be invaluable from that angle, provided such teaching could be definitely associated with it.

Type of Teaching Needed

A sixth implication of our study concerns the type of teaching which should be done in the field of ministerial ethics. It is not necessary to repeat the criticisms already reported. They tend toward the conclusion that properly developed case studies, com-

parable to those used in the teaching of legal ethics, are essential as over against mere advice and anecdote based on the personal experience of the instructor. Furthermore those who attempt to teach professional ethics should be capable of handling this material in such a way as to promote resourcefulness and ethical discrimination rather than mere conformity to uncriticized custom.

FINAL QUERIES

1. Can ministerial ethics be taught more adequately than is done at present in the theological seminaries? Evidence gathered from several sources suggests that this could be done.

2. Should the subject be given in a full course or in specific units of other courses? Experimentation is needed to determine which is the better provision. There is still sufficient opportunity for incidental consideration in a number of courses, even though one of the above provisions is made.

3. Should clergymen receive further ethical instruction after leaving the theological seminary, as in meetings of ministers, courses in summer schools, postgraduate study, or extension courses?

4. Should research be conducted in the field of ministerial ethics in order to develop more adequate source materials for teaching? And if so, what responsibility for leadership in pursuing scientific inquiry seems to rest upon the theological seminaries? Would the organizing of committees on ethics, made up of representatives from the pastorate, from the seminary faculties, and from officials of church bodies, promote intelligent discussion and research?

5. Should the problems of professional ethics be related to field work in such a way as to reveal significant issues and provide adequate instruction for their consideration?

6. Would it be helpful if those engaged in teaching ministerial ethics acquainted themselves with the best experience available,

particularly in the proper use of cases, and develop among themselves both materials and methods commensurate with the difficulty and urgency of the problems?

7. Could individual ministers who are now concerned over the problems discussed in this book, all of which have been reported to the writers by men actively engaged in the leadership of local churches, find some way of combining their interests, either to secure immediate action in their associations, or to let the seminaries know the depth and extent of the need they themselves feel for more adequate teaching? Possibly this is a case where something tangible and effective could actually be accomplished by united action in the cause of professional integrity.

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